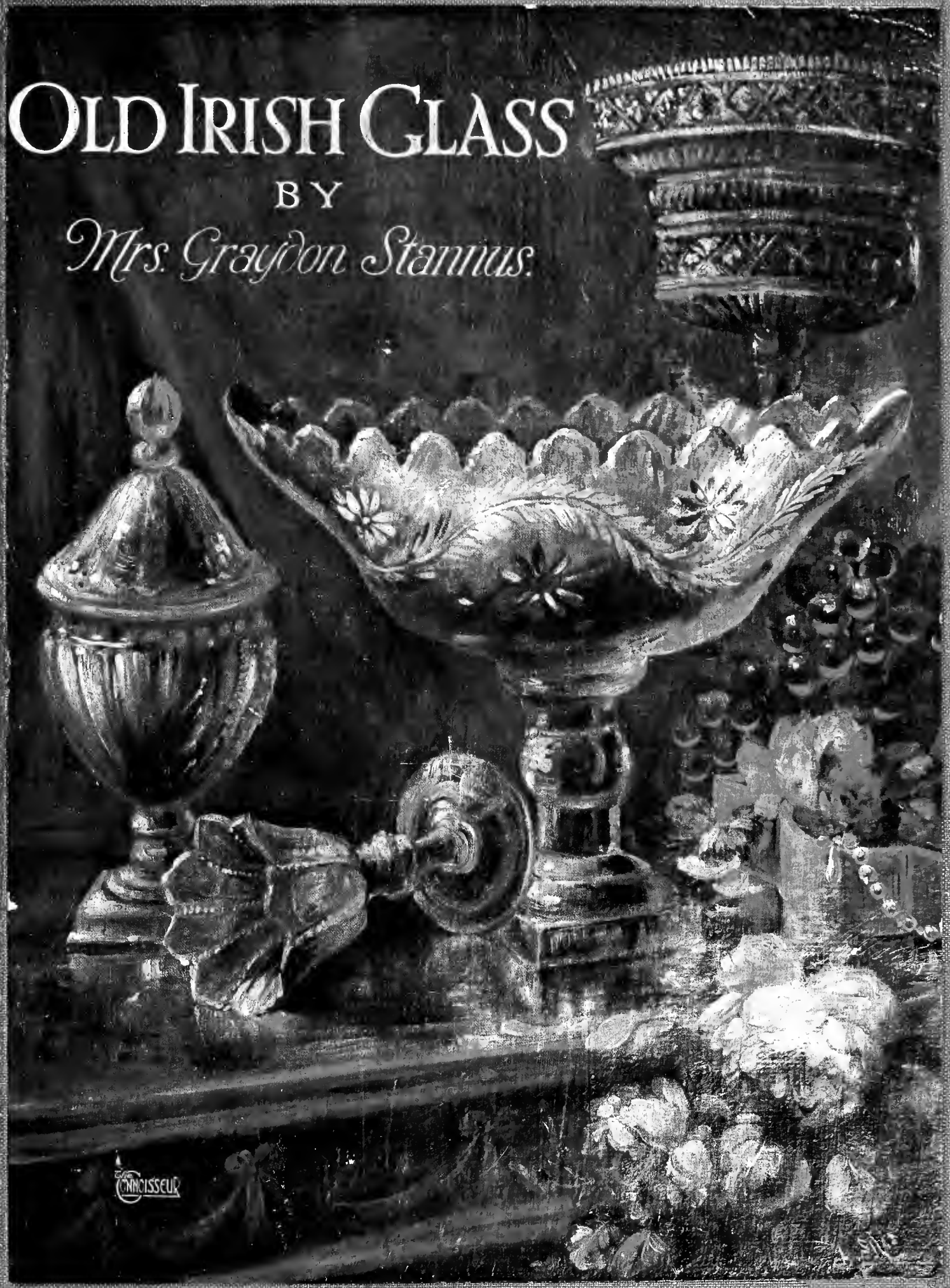
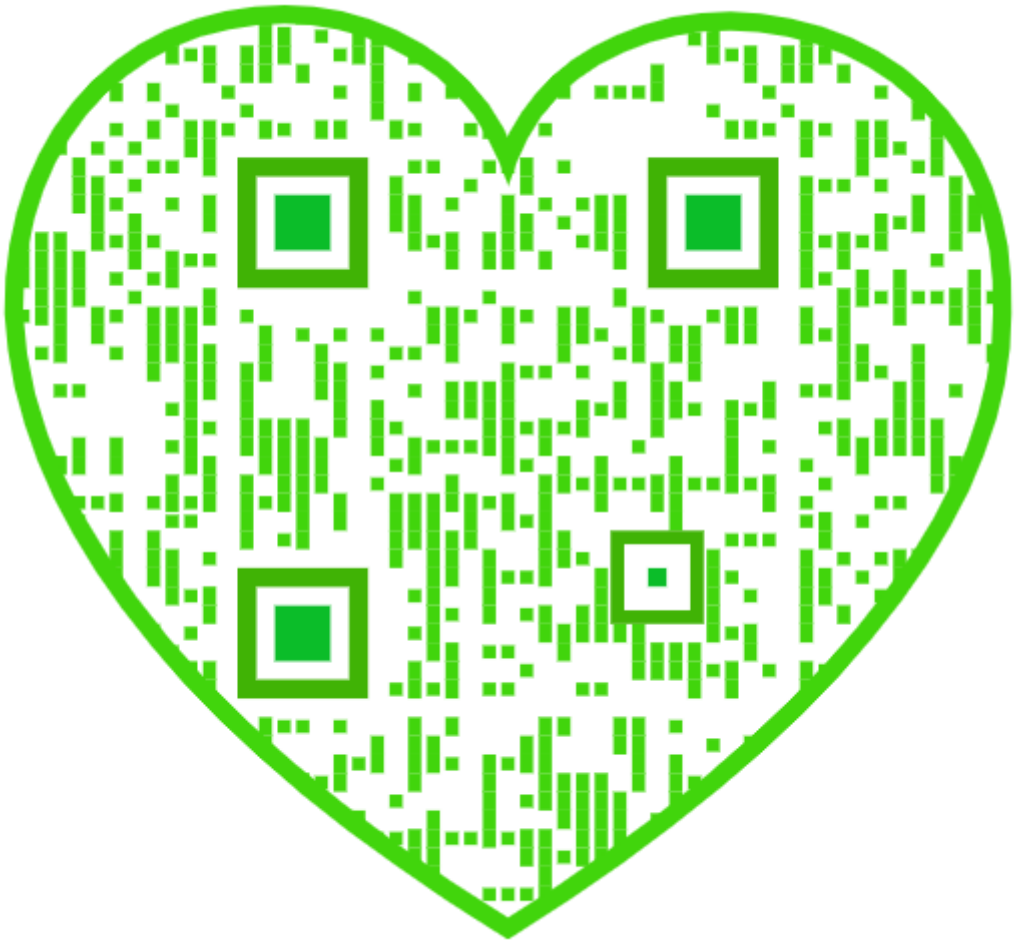
OLD IRISH GLASS

BY

Mrs. Graydon Stannus.





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OLD IRISH GLASS

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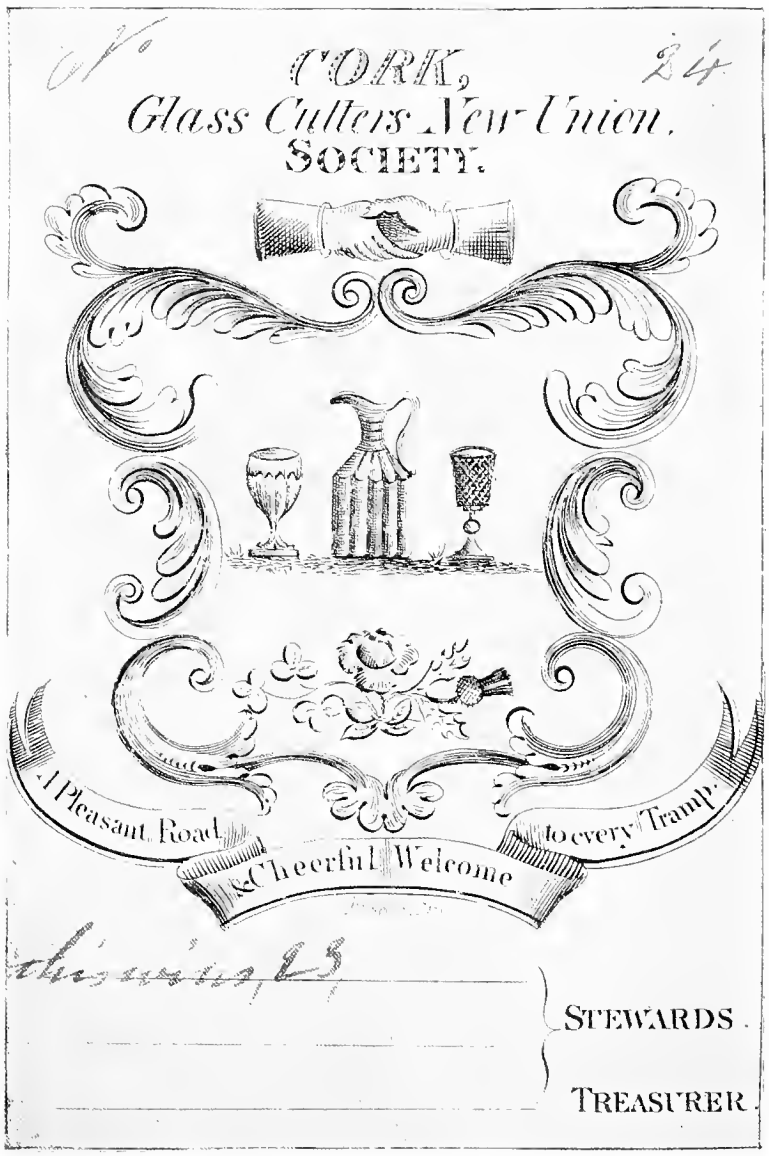
PLATE I.



CARD OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE CORK GLASS-CUTTERS' UNION.
In the possession of the Author.

THE CONNOISSEUR SERIES OF BOOKS FOR COLLECTORS

EDITED BY C. REGINALD GRUNDY

OLD IRISH GLASS

BY

Mrs. GRAYDON STANNUS

New Edition :: Revised and Enlarged

PUBLISHED BY

THE CONNOISSEUR, 1, DUKE STREET, ST. JAMES'S, LONDON, S.W.1

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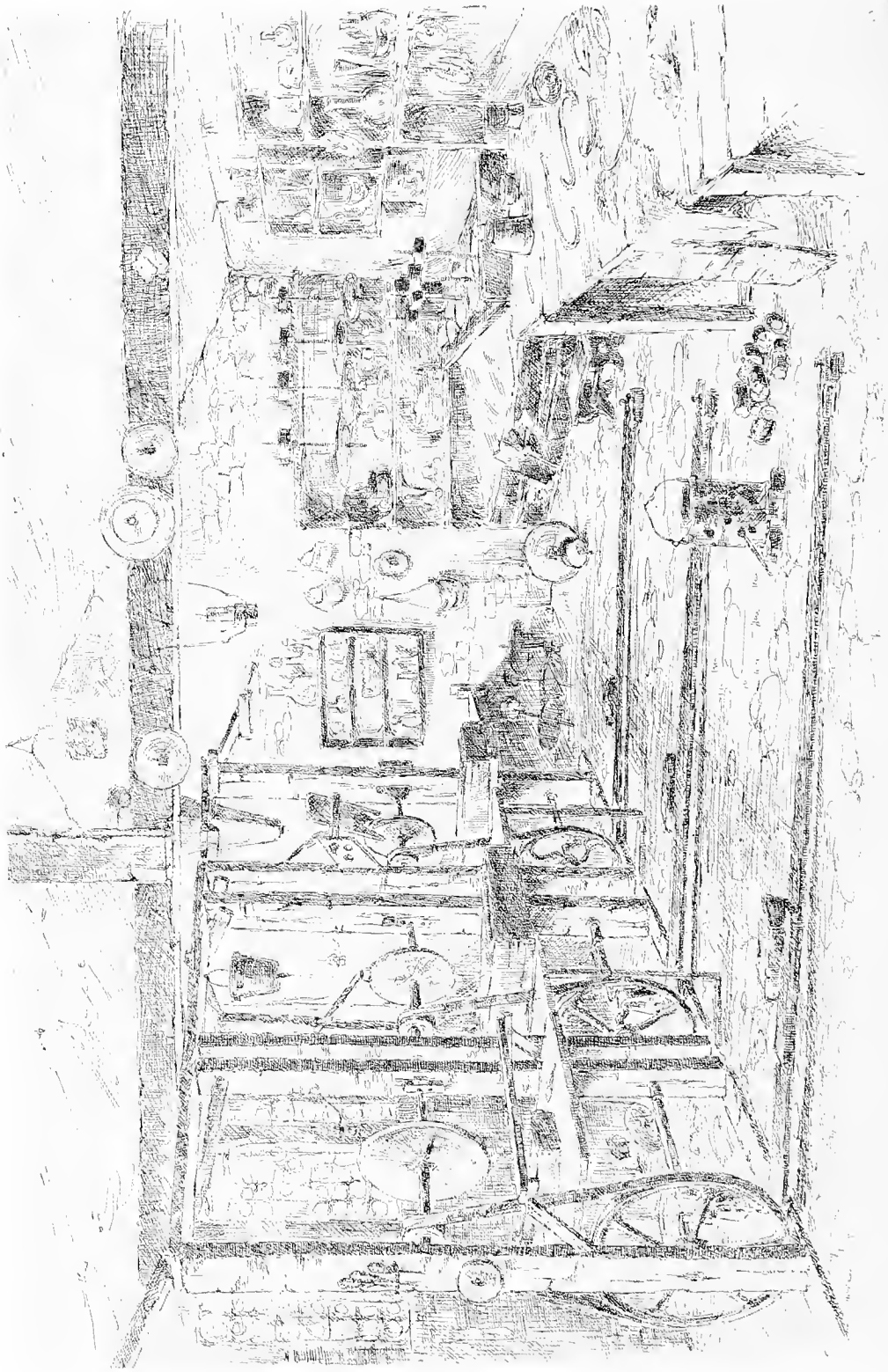


INTERIOR OF A PRIMITIVE HAND GLASS-CUTTER'S SHED.
From a drawing in the Author's possession.

The Fascination of Irish Glass

ALL old glass is interesting, but old Irish glass possesses certain unique qualities which make its collection peculiarly fascinating. In it we find an unsurpassed beauty and depth of colour—a poetry of design and a velvet softness of touch which are a pure joy to the connoisseur. Before describing Irish glass, however, let me first give some idea as to where and when it was produced.

Glass appears to have been made in Ireland to a very small extent during the Middle Ages, and it would seem from the evidence of contemporary records that as early as 1332 the coloured windows of Dublin Castle were made by local workers in Dublin. Some authorities, however, hold that these records refer not to glass-makers, but merely to glaziers, who used foreign glass for their work. What is certain is that the manufacture of glass was not seriously commenced in Ireland until the last quarter of the sixteenth century. Window glass, coloured glass, and drinking glass were certainly made there in 1585, and their manufacture appears to have been carried on more or less steadily from that time onwards in various parts of the country.

History records, for instance, that very early in the seventeenth century a patent was granted to a man named Aston to make glass in Ireland for a period of twenty-one years.

It was not until the second quarter of the eighteenth century that the great period of Irish glass-making arrived, and pieces were produced rivalling, or even surpassing, the best wares of their kind made in England and on the Continent. Unfortunately for the success of the factories, the English Government passed an Act, in 1788, entirely prohibiting the export of glass from Ireland. This measure did more than anything to cripple the great and growing industry, but did not actually kill it, as the makers were not forbidden to sell their goods in their own country!

Irish glass was characterised by what was then regarded as a grave defect. Little or none of it was as colourless as contemporary English pieces, and consequently it did not in those days attain the reputation of the latter. This characteristic, despite the endeavour of local manufacturers to do away with it, appears to have continued for something like a century. Mr. Dudley Westropp, in his important work on "Irish Glass," page 162, mentions a "letter from Exeter, dated December 7th, 1832," in which "Elizabeth Walpole, one of the partners in the Waterford Glass Works, says she had a conversation with Edward Eardley, a glass merchant of Exeter and Plymouth, about some glass she was getting over from Waterford, with a view of selling. She says that Eardley stated that all the Irish glass he had ever seen was dark coloured; but she told him she had sent for some Waterford glass, so that he might see for himself."

This statement throws a light on the somewhat equivocal reputation enjoyed by Irish glass until well on in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, and also

shows that at that time the Waterford makers considered that they had entirely freed their metal from the dark tone formerly characterising it. It is indeed a curious irony of human endeavour that the makers of Waterford glass, now deservedly famous for its beautiful and dark grey-blue tone, tried to eradicate it from quite an early date. They endeavoured to make their glass whiter and clearer, like that of Bristol, and in this they succeeded after 1830. The *late* glass of Waterford, *i.e.*, made 1835 or afterwards, was actually whiter than that of Dublin. *Little did these glass artists think that a century later people in all parts of the world would be trying to reproduce the early dark colour without success.*

The poor reputation for colour that Irish glass suffered under during the eighteenth century must in itself have greatly interfered with the export trade in the finer pieces. That there was an immense export trade during that period is shown from contemporary statistics, but this appears to have been largely confined to commoner wares, such as bottles, glasses, vials, and other articles in constant use and requiring frequent renewal. The finer and more fragile pieces were generally kept at home. The country gentry considered it the proper thing to support local factories by buying the wares made at them, though they did not always appreciate their purchases, and in many instances supplemented them with imported English glass, which they used in preference. Thus it happens that in many old Irish country houses choice specimens of Irish glass have been discovered stored away in garrets and cupboards practically unused since they were made.

There is little or no documentary evidence to establish the origin of these pieces, for, as a race, Irish land-owners are not addicted to keeping receipts of century-old bills, but tradition and the appearance of the surviving pieces confirm the fact that they were originally of Irish manufacture. It must be remembered that the tradition is the more likely to be true because until comparatively recently Irish glass was only lightly valued, so that it was more to the interest of the owner to consider it of English rather than of native manufacture. The tradition, however, is confirmed by the colour and other characteristics of the pieces. It is interesting to note that in many instances missing pieces in sets have been replaced by later productions of English manufacture. The differences between these and their originals are generally easily discernible, the rich depth of tone, which is such a beautiful characteristic of Irish work, being almost altogether absent from the former.

It must not be thought from these remarks that old Irish glass is plentiful. The commoner wares, such as wine glasses, tumblers, and bottles, which were manufactured in such profusion during the eighteenth century, have practically disappeared; and though a larger proportion of the finer and more valuable pieces, used less frequently and treated with greater care by successive generations of owners, have survived, they are still comparatively rare. Nine-tenths of the so-called old Irish glass offered for sale have no claims to be considered as genuine, but are either old pieces from other countries or modern fakes—chiefly the latter.

Glass Factories in Ireland

From time to time humorists over here state that "no glass was ever made in Ireland," so that the following list of localities where a few of the best known glass-houses stood will be of interest:—

Antrim: (Ballycastle) 1755 to 1790.

Bottles, heavy rummers, and very coarse but useful glass.

Belfast: 1781 to 1870.

Fine flint glass, heavy, rather white handsome deep cutting and very fine bold engraving. *Glass was brought here from other parts of Ireland to be decorated.* Foreign engravers were employed and excellent work done. Very fine lustres, candlesticks, etc., were made here by McDowell, following chiefly Adam and Georgian designs.

Cork: 1782 to 1844.

Finely cut glass of every description, delicate engraving on blown ware, gilding; particularly famous for its rummers, heavy and light-blown decanters, and, after 1800, whole dessert services of beautiful colour and various cutting. Black glass was made here in 1785, and window glass in 1782.

As the card of membership of the Cork Glass Cutters' Union (shown on Plate I.) proves, "lustre" cutting was popular here.

Dublin: circa 1630 to 1896.

Window glass was made here from about 1630 and onwards, and as early as 1729 the Round Glass House in Dublin produced choice specimens of glass, such as salvers and dessert baskets, with handles and feet, of particularly fine workmanship and design, but now exceedingly rare and difficult to find. Very beautiful glass was made in Marlborough Street, Dublin, by the firm of Williams, about 1771. They appear to have specialised in chandeliers, candlesticks, salvers, bowls, decanters, bottles, bells, and épergnes. During the last quarter of the eighteenth century and onwards there were numbers of houses here in which every kind of white and coloured glass was made. Many fine specimens still exist, of which Pugh's productions (though rather late) are worthy of note, particularly his "lustre" cutting. The early moulded pieces were very elegant and quaint, very much like Bristol, but so far as I have observed, heavier, and, of course, richer and darker in tone.

Drumrea: (Dungannon) 1771 to 1776.

Much the same kind of glass as Cork, but clearer; noted for fine green and amber coloured glass both in bottles, drops for chandeliers, jelly glasses, wine glasses, and épergnes.

Newry: 1790 to 1847.

A great variety of flint glass, both cut and plain, very heavy. A great deal of table glass was made here.

WATERFORD: 1729 TO 1852.

Produced every possible kind of glass of the most beautiful colour and cutting. The chandeliers, candelabra, boat-shaped and turnover bowls, were perfect. The finest period was just after 1780. After 1830 the glass became much whiter. About 1815 some wonderful deep "step" cutting was done, which made the glass, in some lights, look like silver plate; while dessert services were a great feature, and I constantly come in contact with *parts* of these services (tucked away in cellars and odd places) of the most surprisingly beautiful workmanship and colour.

NOTE.—According to official records, the Waterford Glass Houses closed down from 1750 to 1780, but there exists a good deal of glass traditionally made within this time, certainly having all the attributes of Waterford, and being fashioned in contemporary styles.

PORTARLINGTON: 1670.

One of the very earliest glass-houses was erected here on the Stannus property, but very little is known about it or its particular productions, and it closed down in a few years from lack of financial support. I believe drinking glasses were its chief output. We have a tumbler which was made here, and some wine glasses are still in existence.

IRISH GILDING.

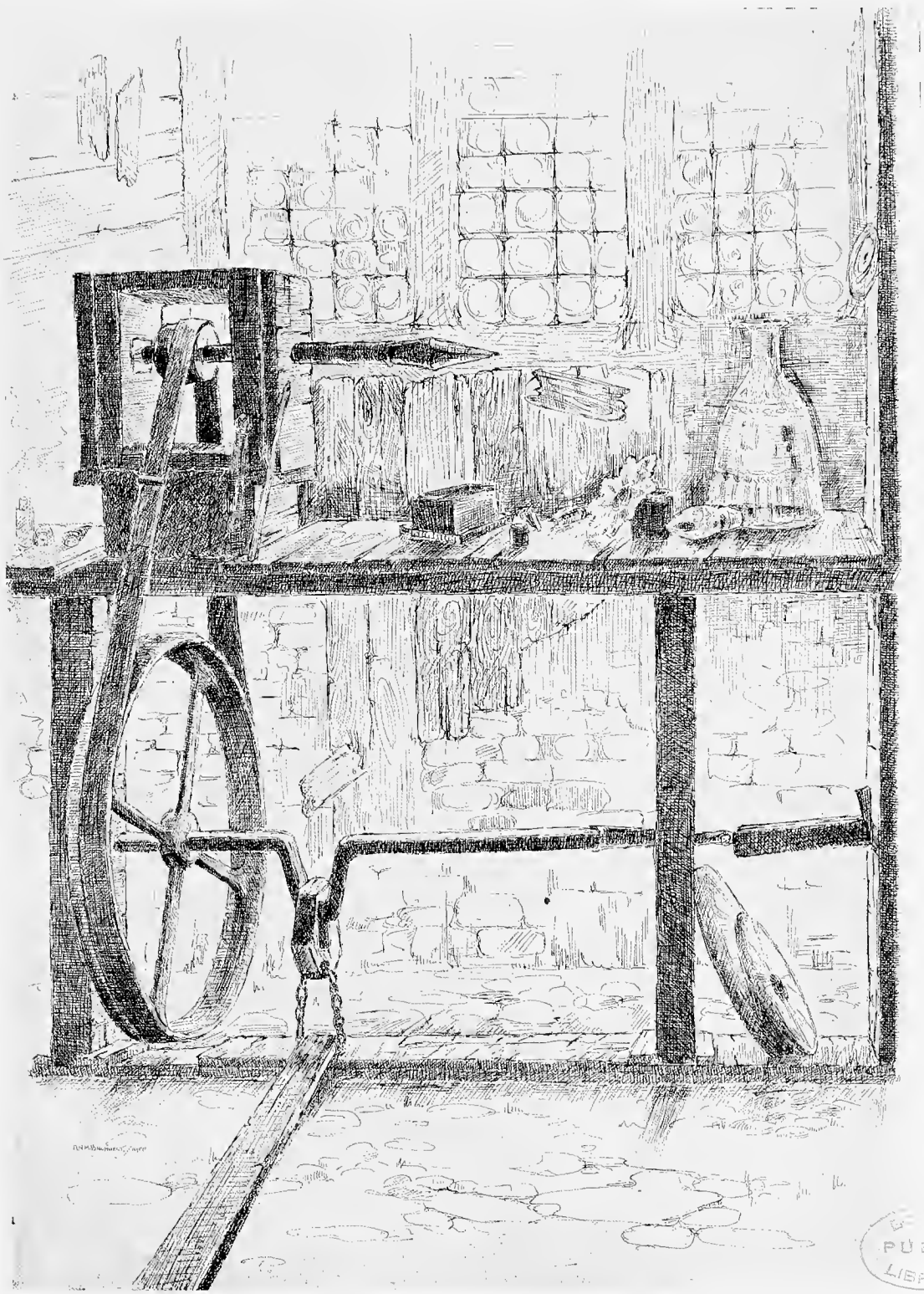
Foreign workmen were employed in Ireland, particularly cutters, engravers, and gilders. Irish gilding almost stands alone. It is *very* hard, and cannot be rubbed off in the usual way. When deliberately scraped off it leaves the glass underneath quite rough, consequently it has survived ordinary wear and tear almost intact. The process was chemical, and it is a great pity that more of it was not done. Very fine soft oil gilding was executed for some years, about 1786, by a German called Grahl.

THE LAST MAKER.

The glass industry died out about 1896, Pugh, of Dublin, being the last maker of flint glass in Ireland. He is often credited with being the first to introduce "lustre" cutting, but the rare plate of the Cork Glass Cutters' Union, already referred to, shows that this decoration must have been done in Cork early in the nineteenth century, since it may be presumed that the pieces they have chosen as being representative of their own craft would be those most largely produced. The fine old jug in the centre, for instance, is a splendid specimen of "lustre" work. Some people, other than glass-cutters, refer to this as "pillar cutting"—quite a good description.

GLASS-MAKERS' WAGES.

While on the subject of the workers, it will be of interest, in these days of high wages, to recall the remuneration paid to these artists in glass as recorded in the Dublin Museum. The founder received the princely sum of 7s. for his week's work, while the fireman only got 6s. The glass-maker himself (not the cutter or the engraver) was evidently a piece-worker, earning at most 50s. a week, and was doubtless a mighty wealthy man.



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DEVICE FOR STOPPERING BOTTLES AND OPENING PANS.
From a drawing in the Author's possession.

Naturally the extraordinary cheapness of fuel in Ireland was a great help to the owner of a glass-house, as wood was the chief thing he burnt. But late in the seventeenth century an Act was passed prohibiting the felling of trees for this purpose, so even in those early days manufacturers had their troubles. However, I do not think this interfered very much. If an Irishman wants a thing, it takes a great deal more than an Act of Parliament passed by the Englishman *on the other side of the water to stop him.*

As late as the nineteenth century, in my father's time, our village carpenter would come and buy a good-sized ash tree for 1s. 6d. Those not so well off freely helped themselves by the light of the moon. We do not bring people to justice in Ireland for little slips of that sort: we should have no time left to ourselves if we did.

GLASS CUTTERS.

Very simple and primitive were the instruments used by the glass-cutters. Speaking broadly, the artist (for he *was* an artist) merely required revolving wheels, from 2 in. to 14 in. or 16 in. in diameter, sand, water, powdered pumice, and "putty powder," a mixture of whitening and other ingredients for polishing.

The wheels consisted of "mild steel" for cutting (many sizes), a "blue stone" wheel for smoothing, and one of very hard wood for polishing. Brush wheels were also employed.

The illustration of a very primitive glass-cutter's shed (from a drawing in my possession) will explain better than words how the work was done; the wheels were turned by the rough boards worked by the cutter's foot, while with his unerring hands he would perform marvellous feats of glass-cutting. Water and sand dripped slowly on to his wheel while he worked, generally from a flower-pot hung above.

He worked from a rough design on paper beside him, and this design he first *scratched* on the piece of glass with a sharp instrument. Much of the glass-cutting was done *outside* the glass-houses by men who had their cutting sheds in their own homes, as is shown in the illustration, and this accounts for the "individuality" of the work done. These men, dreamers and artists, were a "guild" with a very high ideal. The old Irish silversmiths also worked at home in a similar fashion, and, as all the world knows, executed the most perfect work.

In these days it is interesting to know that a strike ended the industry in Cork previous to 1840. Some English workmen came over and told the Cork men they were working too cheaply, though in fact they were much better off than those in England (where machinery was now well installed). The glass owners, who had become wealthy, but saw little prospects of retaining their fortunes under changed conditions, fought the men, and eventually closed down their factories.

Those in Waterford continued for some years later, and the last record of this town is in the catalogue of the London Exhibition of 1851, where Gatchell had some wonderful exhibits, including one centrepiece of forty pieces of glass for a banqueting table, *no metal work of any kind being used in it.*

In 1788 William Penrose made a celebrated service for their Majesties. And as early as 1729 beautiful deep green glass was made at Waterford.

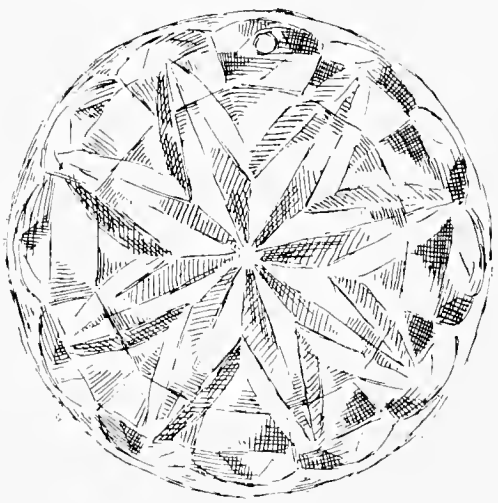
Interesting and romantic were the tales told by the last of the hand glass-cutters, Barry Sheehan, who died a very old man in Cork in 1890. He knew all the old glass-cutters, was an artist and enthusiast, and always kept an old hand-cutting wheel at the back of his shop, a relic of a past age of inspired workers.

According to this great authority, "lustre cutting" was the most difficult of all, and very popular in Cork.

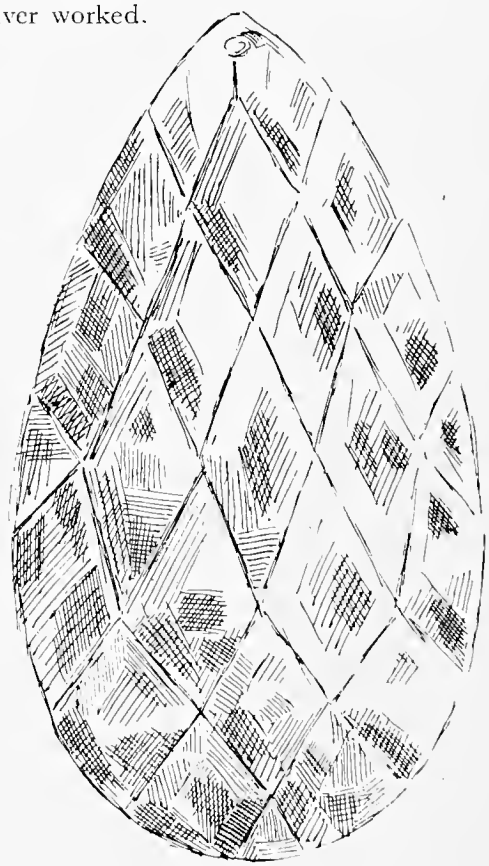
One old lady who lives in Cork, a sister of the late Mrs. Gatchell, who is nearly 100 years of age, has a set of chessmen in old Irish glass, and many children's toys and trumpets were made in her late husband's factory.

One of the glass-houses in Cork was owned by "honest Joe Romayne," one time M.P. for Cork, and another by a family named Foley, and the descendants of both of these people have some splendid pieces still.

Engraving was a different matter. This decoration was more often done by men (chiefly foreigners) who wandered round the country carrying with them a queer little box (one of which I have in my possession). A few delicate copper wheels were used outside the box, which were driven by a shaft, and two wheels inside. The handle was turned by a boy while the engraver worked.

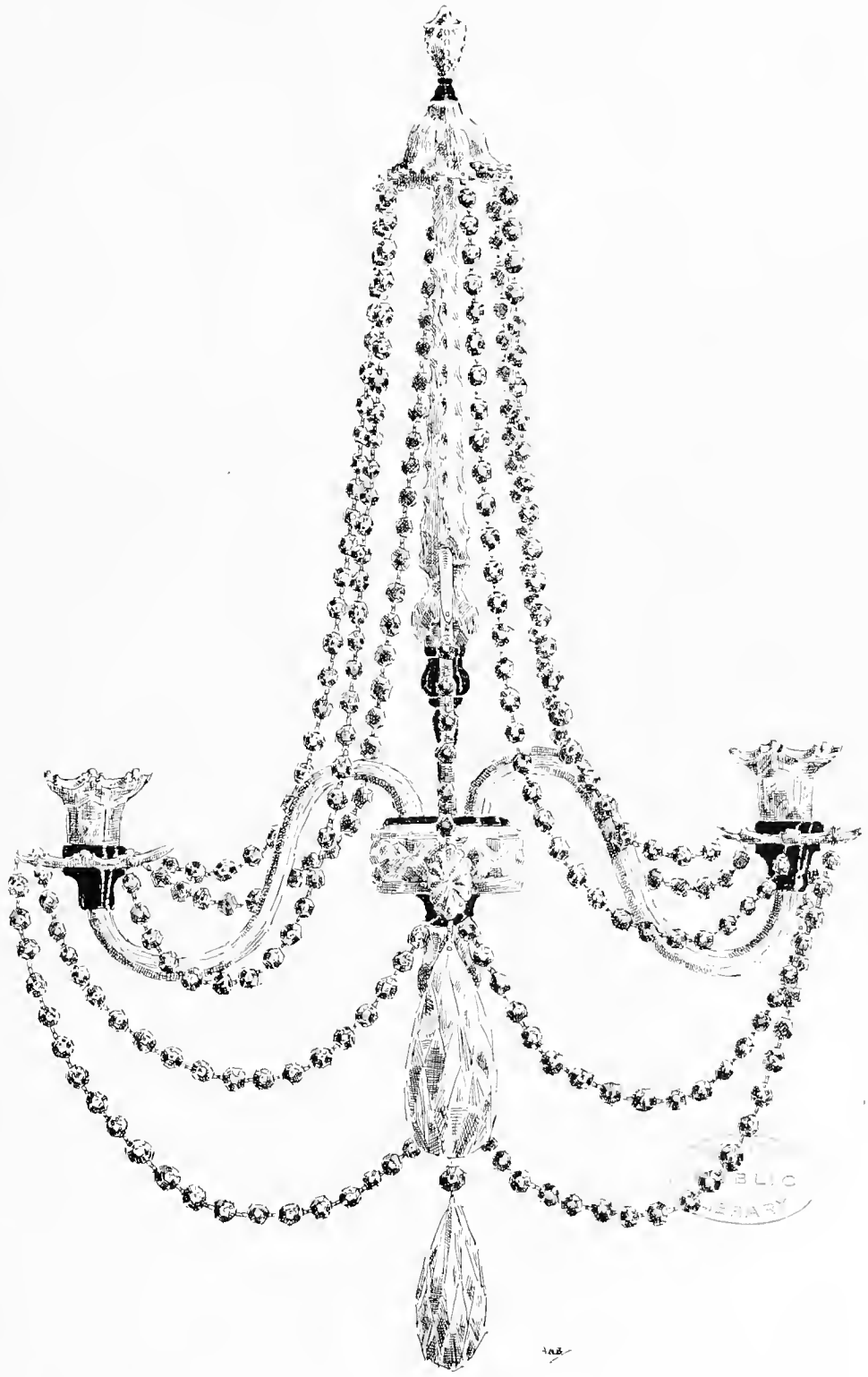


No. 1.

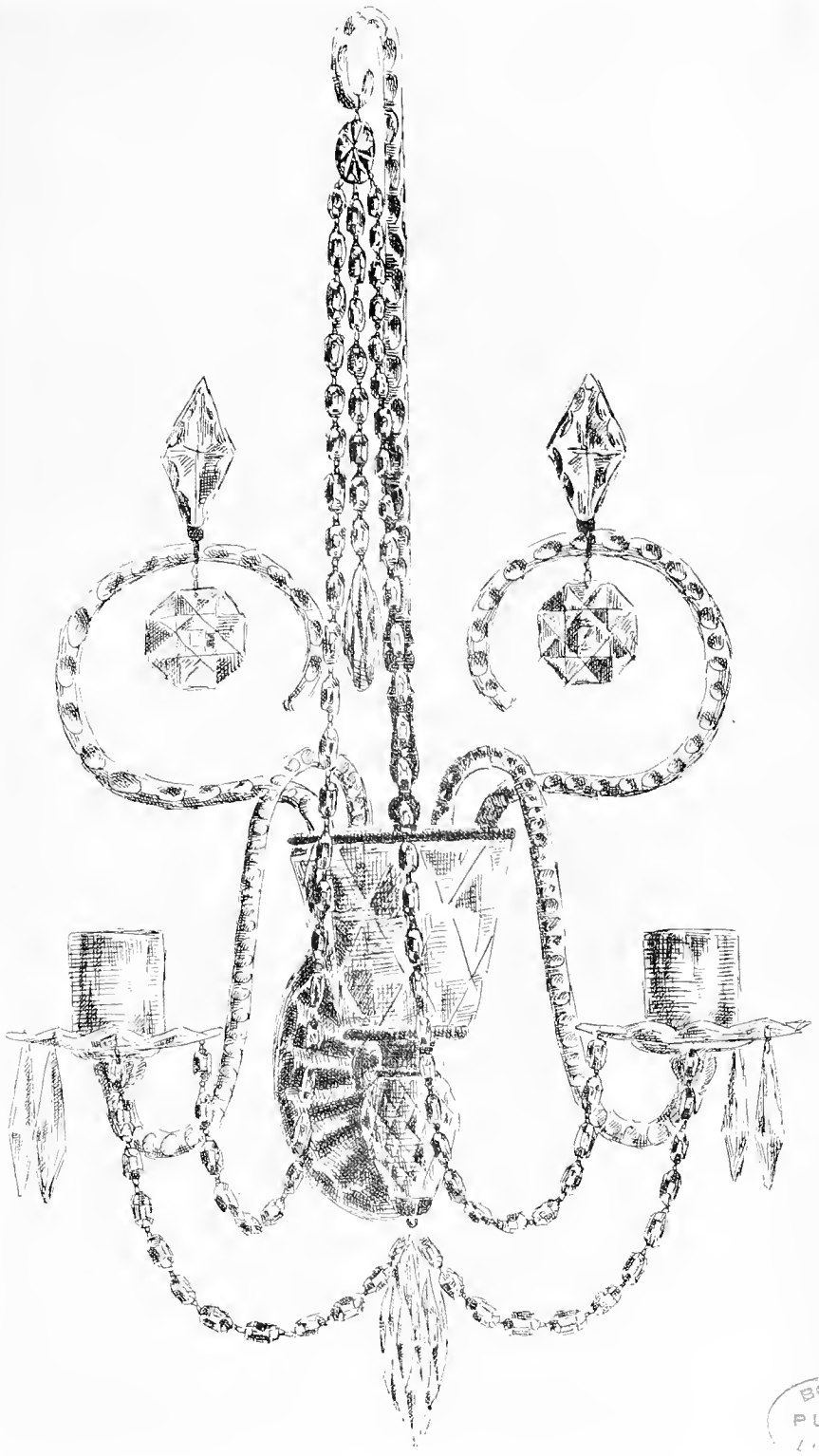


No. 2.

ONE FROM A SET OF FOUR PAIRS OF WALL-LIGHTS MADE IN DUBLIN, 1795–1830. *In the Graydon Stannus family collection. From a drawing in the Author's possession.*
(See also Plates V., VI., and VII.)



ONE FROM A SET OF FOUR PAIRS OF WALL-LIGHTS MADE IN DUBLIN, 1795–1830. *In the Graydon Stannus family collection. From a drawing in the Author's possession.*
(See also Plates IV., VI., and VII.)



BOSTON PUBLIC

ONE FROM A SET OF FOUR PAIRS OF WALL-LIGHTS MADE IN WATERFORD, 1815. *In the Author's collection. From a drawing in the Author's possession.*
(See also Plates IV., V., and VII.)

PUBLIC LIBRARY

ONE FROM A SET OF FOUR PAIRS OF WALL-LIGHTS MADE IN DUBLIN, 1820. *In the Author's collection. From a drawing in the Author's possession. (See also Plates IV., V., and VI.)*

WALL AND TABLE LIGHTS.

CANDLE-LIGHTS became very popular during the early Adam period, and continued to be made for many years. Their conception was, I am sure, French in its origin. A great many were made in Ireland (especially advertised in Dublin), and they were permeated with Adam feeling—graceful and simple.

These lights fell into disuse when gas became popular, and were stowed away in boxes and cellars and lumber-rooms; while others, still less fortunate, were actually thrown away or sold to the ragman for a few shillings.

Of those I have unearthed, a great number are in varying degrees of bad and good condition, and it is most interesting, with the aid of some original drawings (which I am fortunate enough to possess), to reconstruct these lovely fittings to their original beauty (see Plates IV., V., VI., VII.). Out of about five or six broken lights I can generally reconstruct one pair.

In my determined search for these treasures, I find that the metal back plates which fitted on the wall and held the glass lights are in nine cases out of ten missing, and after puzzling over this fact for some time I discovered they were nearly always utilised by being left on the walls and the gas-pipe brought through them! In any case, all the metal mounts appear to have been removed from the branches, cups, etc., and I think they were probably taken off and used for various purposes by the "house-carpenter," or handy man, and held far more value for him than the discarded glass, which is now rapidly becoming priceless.

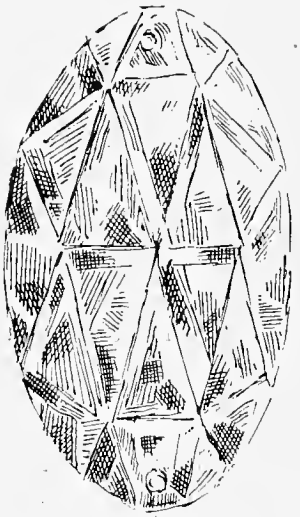
In one instance I lost the ferrule off the end of my whip, and one of our men said he'd "put it right." I noticed a fine bit of chased brass appear on it. I said, "Larry, where did you get that?" "Shure, me lady, it's off th' auld glass light that was tooken from t' hall"! And it was! Irishmen have natural instincts—they always know a good thing, and they can unerringly tell you if a person is "someone" or not!

CHANDELIER DROPS, PENDANTS, AND ORNAMENTS.

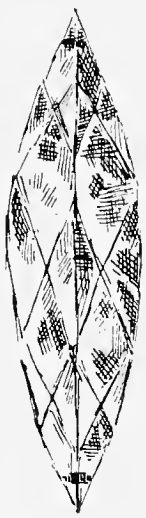
THERE are many interesting things to be learnt about the drops which hang on chandeliers and table lights. The first and most surprising is that most of them, even those found on quite early Irish chandeliers, were made in England and France! *Very few were manufactured in Ireland.*

The genuine old Irish drops (so far as my personal observation and experience goes) were always round or *almond* shaped. The most characteristic distinction between them and those made in other countries is that they are very flat when viewed sideways (see illustration No. 3, page 8), whereas the English and French come to a point in the centre—sometimes on one side, more often on both—not a sharp point, of course, but still a point (see illustration No. 4, page 8, which will make the difference quite clear). No. 1 (page 6) is a very rare specimen.

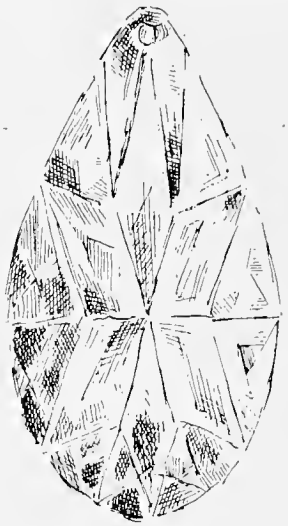
All the chandeliers and lights made for my family had in every case these Irish drops, being, of course, special orders. When seen on a chandelier it is remarkable



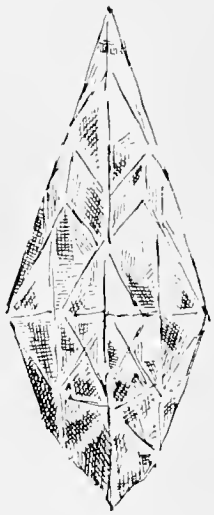
No. 3.—Face.



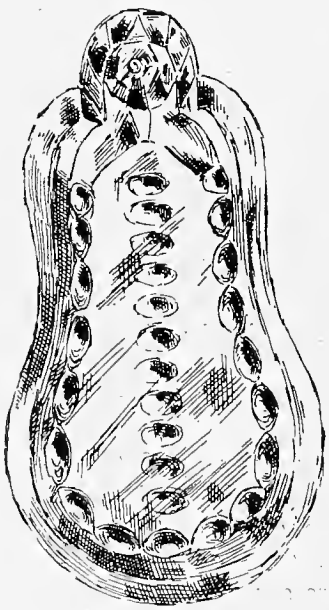
No. 3.—Side View.



No. 4.—Face.



No. 4.—Side View.



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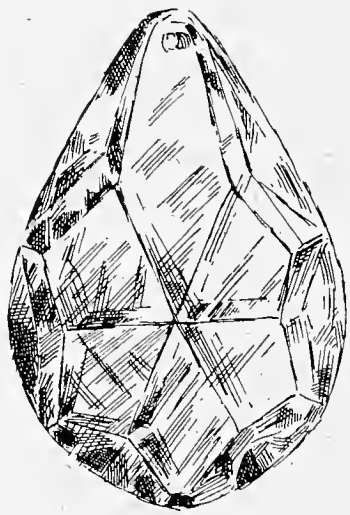


No. 6.

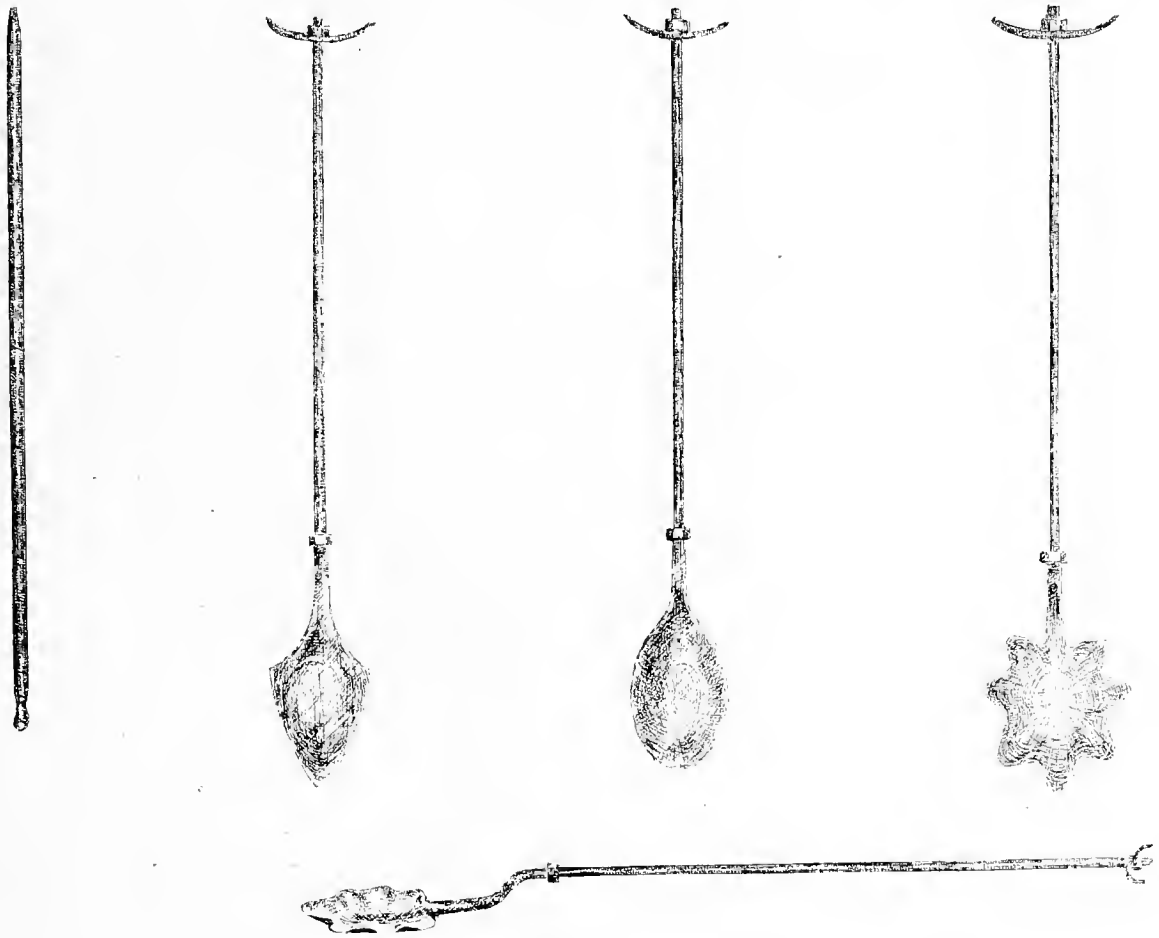
No. 7.

ORNAMENTAL DROPS.

how much more graceful the Irish drops look; they are softer, more richly facetted, smoother, and, of course, deeper in colour. The large pendants (see illustrations Nos. 2, 5, 6, 7) for ornaments and stars for chandeliers were manufactured in an interesting way. They were made in *ladles*, designed to the required outline and size, with a long handle (see illustration below). The ladle was dipped in the pot of molten glass, withdrawn full, and after being allowed to cool slightly until the glass had set, tipped out into a "dry" furnace (known as a lehr) for some hours; by that time the glass was hard and fit to be facetted by hand.

In Italy and Spain I have watched the glass-makers at much the same work, but in these instances the glass was made in cut moulds, so that the glass was *pressed* into a pattern while hot, and not cut afterwards.

The illustrations are of Irish ornaments in my possession on family chandeliers, and vary in length from 5 in. to $8\frac{1}{2}$ in.



BLOW-PIPE AND LADLES (one shown side view).
USED IN MAKING STARS AND ORNAMENTAL PENDANTS.

The Characteristics of Irish Glass

Irish glass, more especially Waterford, of the typical period, may be distinguished from contemporary English glass and foreign and modern fakes of all nationalities by a number of characteristics which may be grouped under the headings of Weight, Colour, Resilience, Feeling to the Touch, and Ring. Let me take these one by one.

WEIGHT.

Irish glass is generally very heavy, though there are exceptions to this rule, markedly in the blown specimens from about 1735 to 1750, which are extremely light. These pieces were never cut, but either engraved only or left perfectly plain. They can be distinguished from foreign pieces of similar weight, as they never show the little specks of sand in the metal peculiar to the latter. On the other hand, air-bubbles often appear in the Irish glass, which were caused by the faulty stirring of the molten metal. These are sometimes so minute that they appear like sand specks to the naked eye, and it is only possible definitely to identify them as bubbles by the use of a magnifying glass.

COLOUR.

All old Irish glass has a peculiar depth of tone, but the early glass of Cork, Waterford, and Dublin is especially distinguished in this quality. Its steel or grey-blue tone is unique. In this respect there is very little difference between the wares from the three places, as they are all characterised by the same mysterious grey colour (supposed to be caused by impure ingredients). It should be remembered that the factories in all three localities obtained their materials for glass-making from the same sources, and that the workmen employed in them frequently passed from one to another, so that, theoretically, the metal produced in the three towns should be practically identical. There are, however, tangible differences in at least a portion of the glass emanating from the various localities. Thus I have noticed that some Cork glass has a decided yellowish tinge which Waterford never has. On the other hand, Waterford glass is often distinguished by a peculiar cloudy bloom covering the metal, which can be rubbed off, but will assuredly return. This "bloom" must not be confused with the milkiness found in decanters, etc., which is caused by wine or water being allowed to remain in them for long periods. It is quite different: a soft bloom, exactly like that on grapes, the same colour, or even darker, than the glass, and often will be found forming a beautiful band of rainbow hue running round the piece it adorns. I do not know, for certain, the cause of this appearance, but it probably originates in some atmospheric action on the lead in the metal. It is only found on very early dark pieces, and its possession may be regarded not only as an additional charm of the piece so characterised but also as a proof of its authenticity. These pieces are most interesting, but are not always appreciated as

they should be. Some time ago I parted with a magnificent Waterford bowl, beautifully toned in this manner, only to find a week later that it had been chemically polished clear and bright, leaving it with not a tithe of its pristine beauty.

These distinctions of tone and colour which I have ventured to point out are by no means universal, so that a piece which does not possess them must not be rejected as spurious *merely on this account*. Sometimes it is impossible to say from what county a piece came, and this has led experts to refer to the products supposed to emanate from the Cork or Waterford factories as "Munster glass." Even this term is not broad enough, however, for it fails to include the pieces turned out by the Dublin factories, and these are nearly as likely to be mistaken for Cork or Waterford wares, as the two latter are likely to be mistaken for each other. *The blue-grey tinge popularly regarded as exclusively associated with Waterford glass is quite an erroneous means of identification, as most of the pieces I have come across, actually impressed with the mark "Cork Glass Co.," were of this tint.* Dublin glass, before 1800, was very dark in colour, and the very early pieces are almost black.

It is very frequently suggested that the chemical action of the air on old Irish glass may have something to do with the mystery of its unique coloration; and, strange as it may seem, it is an undoubted fact that glass does change its tone with the slow lapse of years. I believe this to be specially so with Irish glass which has remained a long time in Ireland; and the existence of such phenomena is borne out by the effect that the atmosphere of Ireland has on old white marble. It may be argued that, should this be the case, the coloration of Irish glass may be caused entirely by the atmospheric conditions under which it is kept, and owe nothing to its local peculiarities of manufacture. This theory, however, cannot be substantiated, *as English glass does not appear to be affected by Irish atmosphere to anything like the same degree as the native metal.* I have frequently seen old Irish dessert services and chandeliers in which individual pieces which had been broken had been replaced by facsimiles made in England. These replaced pieces, however early their origin, do not appear to have changed colour in the least, and because of this can be readily singled out among their fellows of native manufacture.

RESILIENCE OF IRISH GLASS.

Irish glass is far tougher and stronger than any other, hence its wonderful survival even when in constant use. It takes a severe blow to break it, or even chip it, and I have seen solid pieces fall on a hard floor without being any the worse, beyond "singing" loudly. It has a wonderful elasticity, and actually bounces in a way that I have never found in any other glass. Some time ago the ring securing a large and valuable chandelier to the ceiling of one of my rooms gave way, with the result that the chandelier fell to the ground from a height of twelve or fifteen feet. It was, of course, broken with the fall from such a height, but the centre pendant, a large solid lump of lead glass, weighing 9 lbs., had not been shattered in the least, *though the force of the fall had flattened its point.*

THE FEEL OF IRISH GLASS.

Irish glass does not feel harsh or cold like most English or foreign, but gives a sense of soft warmth to the touch. There is something of the same distinction as between porcelain and earthenware, though not nearly to such a marked extent. One has to acquire a knowledge of it by experience; and though the tyro may at first perceive little or no variation between the feel of Irish and English glass, if he will cultivate his sense of touch by handling authenticated pieces of both varieties, he will soon find that there is a small but perfectly distinguishable difference between them.

THE RING OF IRISH GLASS.

I must make special mention of the ring of Irish glass, as this is an important point. All British glass has a clear, definite, bright ring, but to anyone with a musical ear it will be interesting to listen to the peculiar throb in Irish glass, not so much a ring as a rich throb, sometimes (particularly in large pieces) like a vibrato between two notes. I do not say that you get this in all Irish glass, only in the greater part of it.

No one, for instance, would expect a candlestick to ring or a salt-cellar, or a thick shallow piece heavily cut. Jugs, as a rule, also have a special dislike to displaying their voices, so, naturally, people must use their discernment.

DIFFERENCE IN THE RING OF OTHER GLASS.

This peculiar ring of Irish glass is not to be found in glass of alien origin. The foreign copies are quite different. Sometimes they will not ring at all, especially the wine glasses; the better ones give a sound of sorts, but it is very dead, and, if carefully listened to, the note is never true, just a little flat, quite unlike the "singing Waterford."

FAKES

THESE are innumerable, and belong to all periods, old and modern, since Irish glass first became popular.

No glass in the world has been so much copied, and none has, in the long run, stood out so successfully in defying the faker. This constitutes one of the great attractions of Irish glass to the collector, for though many imitations of it have been made of sufficient excellence to deceive the inexperienced and unwary, it cannot be copied sufficiently well to deceive the connoisseur.

The finest reproductions from France, Belgium, Holland, and even Germany, all fail in colour and texture, though some of the cutting is exceedingly clever.

At the present moment there is an enormous amount of spurious glass on the market, and some time ago a lot of remarkable copies were in circulation. They were the best that have yet appeared, especially the urns and candlesticks, and

WATERFORD BOWL OF RARE BEAUTY.
7½ in. high, 12 in. diam. Engraved with escutcheon of the WINDE family (Chamberlain to H.R.H. Princess Sophia, sister to George III.).
Probably a Christening Bowl. *Walter Harding collection.*

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

A REMARKABLE CONE-SHAPED BOWL IN TWO PARTS.
12 in. high, base 8 in.; *circa* 1770. No duplicate.
Originally in the Author's and now in the Walter Harding collection.

numbers fell into the hands of the unwary. One special weakness, however, was very noticeable—*the colour fell in the tall pieces, leaving the tops whiter than the bases.*

At the present moment some very clever reproductions from Bohemia are arriving in England, but they are very light and have a peculiar *pink tinge*, which is more specially noticeable in the larger pieces.

As has already been pointed out, nearly all Irish glass is heavy, and a very large proportion of the modern fakes fail to attain the required weight. A marked exception to the general rule of weight is to be found in Irish blown specimens, produced from about 1735 to 1750, which were very light, and only engraved or quite plain, *never cut*. The faker frequently forgets the latter point. When, however, he remembers it, and produces plain or engraved pieces similar to the Irish, there is yet another point of distinction. The Irish pieces often show air-bubbles, but never the little specks of sand which, as I have already said, almost invariably appear in the metal peculiar to foreign glass.

DIFFERENCE OF COLOUR.

The most important distinction between Irish glass and foreign imitations is to be found in their colours, and in this respect it is the early glass of Cork, Waterford, and Dublin that defies the copyist more than any other. Its steel or grey-blue tone stands alone, although, alas, imitations artificially coloured with thin cobalt and ultramarine have been, and in all probability will continue to be, sold as the genuine article. In the analysis of Irish glass there is no trace of cobalt.

Some copies of an almost emerald green have changed hands in good faith as Waterford glass. How could green be produced from lead oxide, potash, soda, and silica?—for this is the analysis of an early piece of Waterford "pot metal" glass of the dark grey hue.

The Increasing Popularity of Irish Glass

The multitude of fakes on the market bears testimony to the increasing demand for Irish glass.

During the last six years, those members of the public who have a knowledge of glass have realised more and more the value of the genuine Irish article, which, of course, is due to the fact that it cannot be copied sufficiently well to deceive the connoisseur. The direct outcome of this is a steady increase in the market value, and rare specimens, which were made at from 25s. to £4, now readily fetch anything from £10 to £400; in fact, a single piece sold recently for £750, and a beautiful bowl passed through my hands at £550; while only a few months ago a chandelier was sold at an Irish auction for £1,218.

Magnificent specimens of Irish glass have found their way into English collections, as will be seen by the plates shown in this book. Photographs of most of the well-known pieces in the Dublin Museum, and in private Irish houses, have

already been reproduced in various publications; but the accompanying photographs are of exceptional specimens, taken exclusively from *English* collections, and a very large number of them has passed through my own hands.

EXPERIENCE ESSENTIAL.

It is absolutely impossible to become a sound judge of Irish glass without years of experience, and, above all, without the constant actual handling of pieces of all dates and descriptions, consequently the genuine Irish dealer who has lived amongst it all his life has a very great pull with regard to actual knowledge.

So many specimens were made to order, and were therefore of special shape and cutting, that it is very difficult for the uninitiated to recognise a piece as being of any certain factory or period, and he is naturally mystified when he tries to classify such pieces into more or less well-known categories. For instance, an ancestor of mine had in his possession an early deep coloured bowl, cover, and stand of exceptional quality, made about 1750. His son, in 1790, had it cut in "flat diamonds" (a cutting then much in vogue), the result being a specimen of early dark "wavy" glass, adorned with the beautiful cutting of forty years later, and this is only *one* instance of many which could be quoted.

IRISH GLASS SOLD ABROAD.

Great quantities of Irish glass were made, and the official Irish records show that large numbers of pieces were exported to America, Spain, Portugal, and the West Indies, etc. Many of our finest specimens were also taken to Holland, where they found a permanent home, *and were extensively copied by the foreign glass-makers.*

France was very keen on Irish glass, and I have unearthed there some very lovely and absolutely genuine specimens, especially wall-lights and chandeliers.

Needless to say, a very big trade was done by the glass-houses direct with old Irish families, who gave large orders for glass-ware, ranging from single pieces to complete table services, of which few records appear to have been kept.

UNCUT PIECES.

A large amount of Irish glass was made and put by, uncut, as Irish families (especially those who lived near the glass-houses) preferred to choose their own cuttings from drawings, so as to have something different from their neighbours. This accounts for the number of uncut pieces still to be found in various parts of Ireland, especially thick finger-bowls, which were, undoubtedly, made in great quantities to await orders.

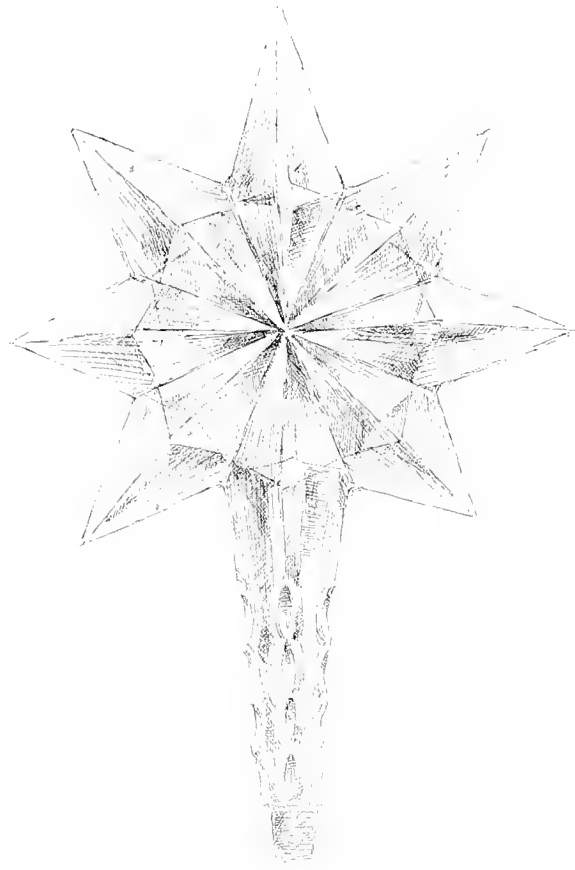
THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

The following plates give some idea of the beautiful pieces of glass which have left Ireland, but there are magnificent specimens still there, which will probably never be placed on the market—pieces as poetic in design as their owners are in mind; pieces that will live for the sons and heirs to love and cherish with the many

other treasures of Ireland's finest periods, long after Sinn Feiners have ceased their endeavours to destroy all that is best and loveliest in the old country.

At the time of writing this, I find an enormous amount of spurious "Irish" glass on the market, and I take this opportunity of warning all collectors and dealers (many of whom are my friends) to be exceedingly careful. It is essential that all lovers of Irish glass should keep their collections pure, and some of these fakes are so clever that dealers will have to exercise the greatest vigilance and care if they are to avoid the ignominy of having pieces which they have sold in good faith returned to them as "wrong." At the present time, all the best known dealers in Irish glass are trusted by their customers, and their advice is taken without question. It is in the best interests of their great profession that this sense of confidence should remain.

In conclusion, I should like to add that I hope this book—written, as it is, at the request of many lovers of Irish glass—may be a real help to the novice, and assist him to distinguish between the "true" piece and the forgery.



STAR FROM A CHANDELIER.

THE STANNUS CREST,
ENGRAVED ON A WATERFORD BOWL, 1790.
(*See Plate XVI.*)

ILLUSTRATIONS

Photos by Hana

BOWLS, DISHES, PLATES AND TAZZE

WATERFORD BOWL, *circa* 1783. 8 in. by 10 in. Very flat diamond cutting, on three feet carved as paws. This bowl, which is one of the finest the author has ever seen, is exceptionally notable from the fact that the pontil has been *worked up into an ornament* instead of being broken off.

In the collection of Commander Swithinbank.

WATERFORD FLOWER BOWL, 12 in. high. Heavy early glass, finely cut, with castellated edge. *Circa* 1783.

In the collection of Commander Swithinbank.

An exceptionally large "TURNOVER" CORK BOWL, on heavily domed base; early. Flat cutting. 12 in. high.

In the collection of Mrs. Rea.

A similar example is in the Walter Harding collection.

WATERFORD CANOE-SHAPED BOWL, deep colour and rare shape; 1783. 10 in. high, 14 in. wide.

In Viscount Furness's collection.

Rare heavily chiselled CHRISTENING BOWL. Irish, 1760. 26 in. across.

In the Author's collection.

MUNSTER GLASS BOWL. 10 in. by 11 in. *Circa* 1780. Heavily but beautifully cut.

In the collection of Mrs. Hall.

"PINCHED" SIDED BOWL on round domed foot. 11 in. wide, 8 in. high.

In Mr. Henderson's collection.

WATERFORD ORANGE BOWL. 16 in. by 7½ in. Unusually large. *Circa* 1790.

In Major Pope's collection.

A wonderful early "PINCHED" BOWL, showing the remarkable "rainbow" band of faint colour running round the body. The foot is square and moulded in a "dome." Note that the waste metal running from the square base has not been cut away, proving that this piece, for some reason unknown, has been left unfinished. There is no trace of "milkiness" about this bowl. The small one (3 in. high) beside it is a traveller's sample, made this minute size for convenience in carrying about.

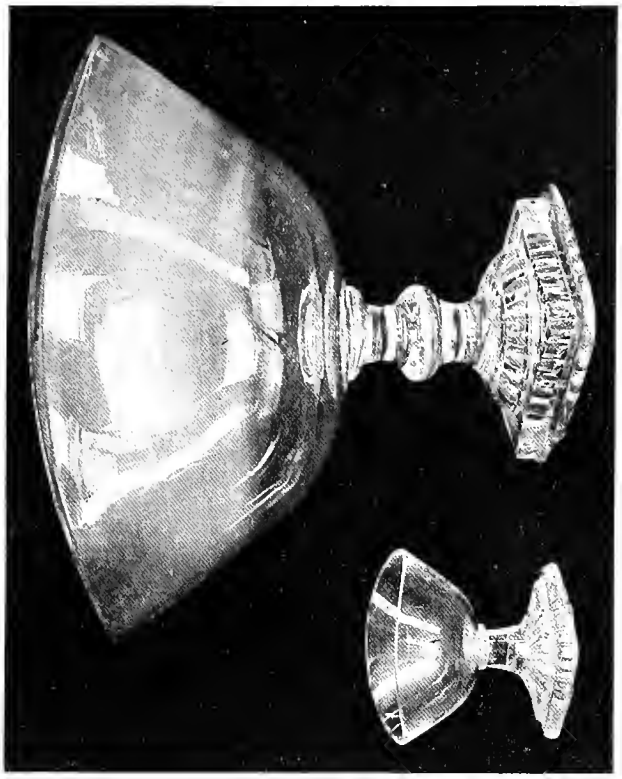
In the Author's collection.

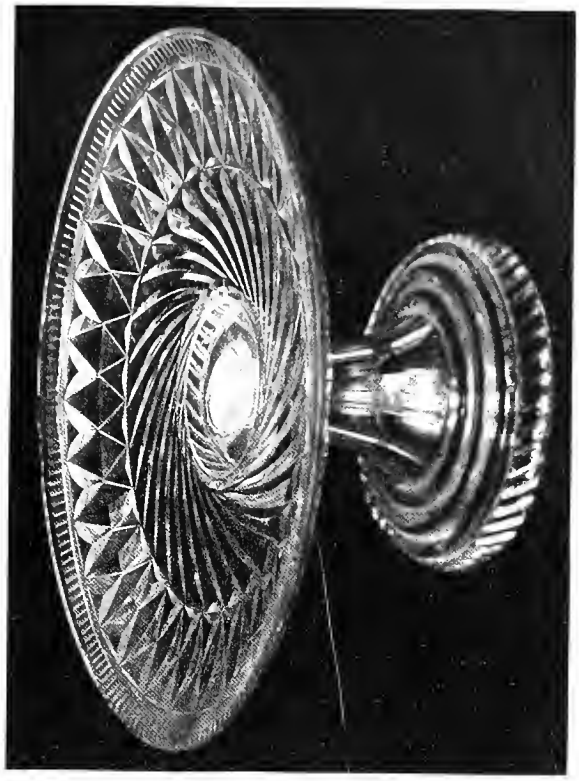
Very large early IRISH MOULDED BOWL. It rings exactly like a bell. Deep coloured and very soft glass. No duplicate known. Date 1760.

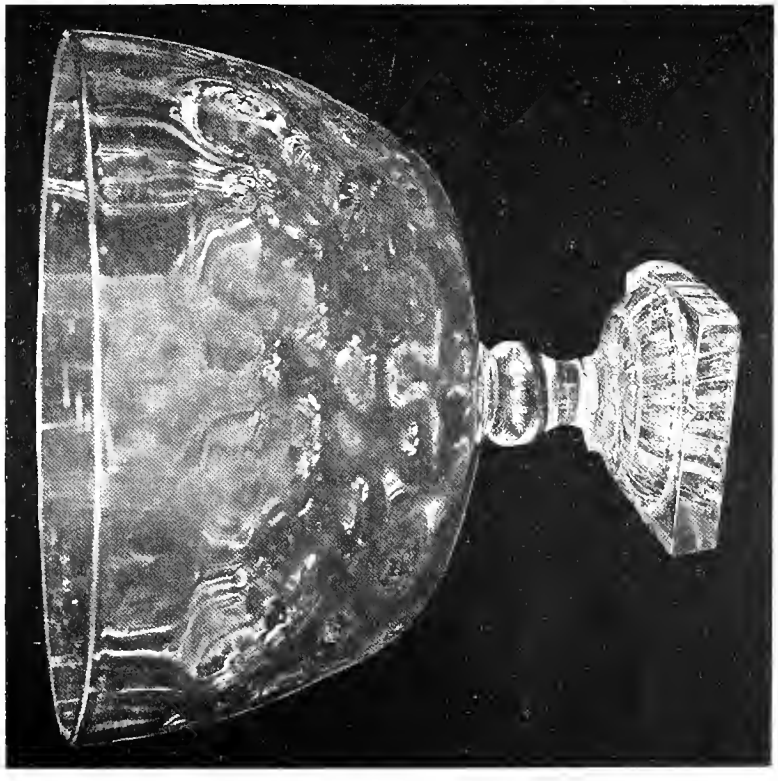
In Mrs. Rea's collection.

Shallow diamond-cut WATERFORD REVOLVING CENTRE DISH, 18 in. by 6 in. The glass all fits together without any metal mounting. *Circa* 1783.

In the Hon. Mrs. York's collection.







Rare specimen of CORK GLASS ORANGE BOWL, *circa* 1790.
14 in. long, 8½ in. high.
Originally in the Author's collection;
now in the Walter Harding collection.

Finely cut WATERFORD BOWL, *circa* 1790.
13 in. long, 9 in. high.
In Viscount Furness's collection.

Early Cork "PILLAR" BOWL.
In Viscount Furness's collection.

Large BOWL of exceptional shape, colour, and cutting. Knopped stem. *Circa* 1785.
In the Author's family collection.

PLATE XIV. OLD IRISH GLASS

Curious specimen of early IRISH GLASS, engraved. Of a beautiful deep colour. The stand is of Irish bog-oak, Celtic carving, the Irish wolfhound being very carefully executed. 18 in. high.

In the collection of Commander Swithinbank.

Large TWO-HANDLED POSSET BOWL, 18 in. high. Possibly as early as 1750. Irish.

In the collection of Mrs. Hall.

Rare heavy, dark, plain OGEE BOWL, 11 in. by 11 in. Irish, *circa* 1760.

In the collection of Mr. Robert Frank.

PUBLIC LIBRARY

STRAWBERRY AND FAN CUT BOWL, 8 in. high. Made at Waterford in 1790, and bearing the Stannus crest, finely engraved.

In the Author's collection.

WATERFORD BOWL AND BASIN, cut all over with large, flat double stars. 11 in. by 12 in. *Circa* 1783.

In Mr. Wild's collection.

TWO-HANDLED CUP AND COVER, heavy clear glass. 4 in. high. *Circa* 1780. Dublin (copy of Bristol, but much heavier).

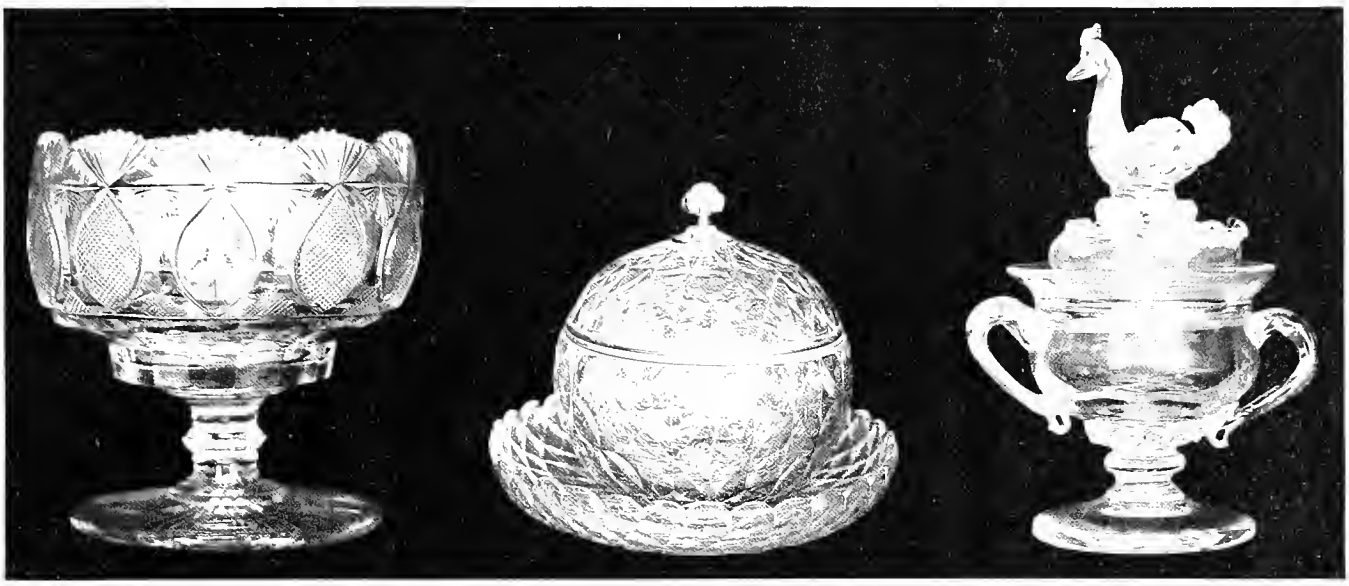
In Mrs. Day's collection.

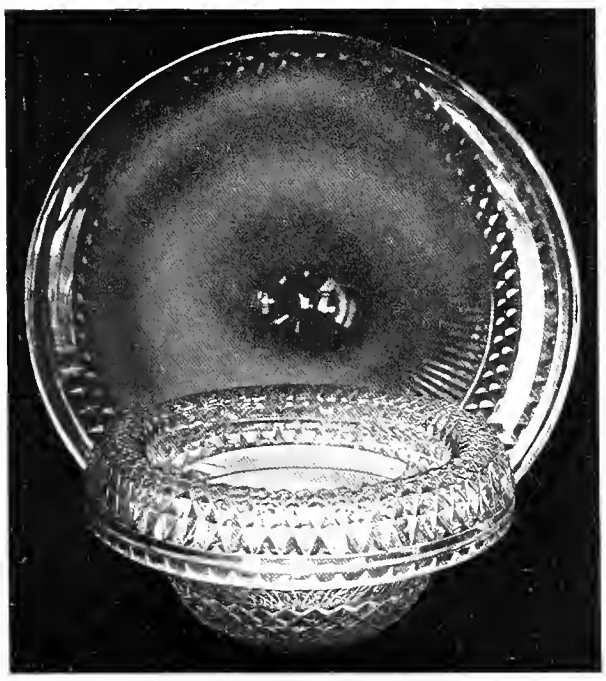
A giant "TURNOVER" ROUND BOWL AND DISH. Bowl, 12 in. wide; dish, 20 in. Waterford, *circa* 1815.

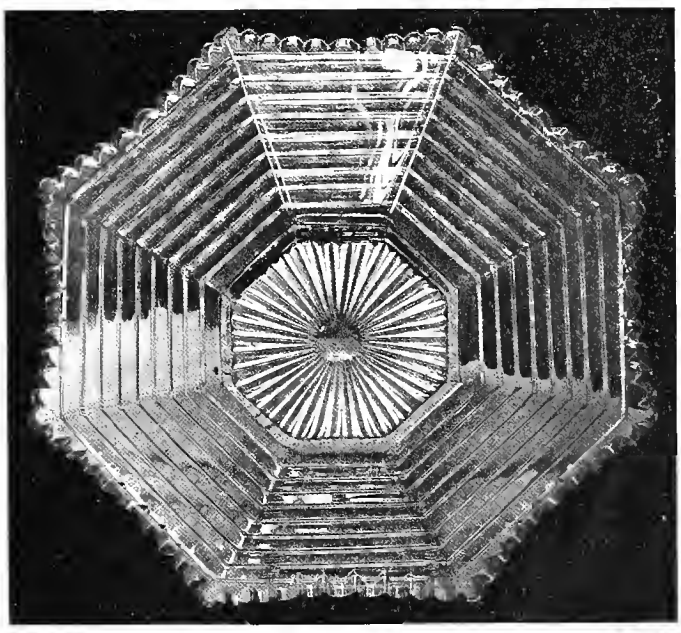
In Mrs. Rea's collection.

OCTAGONAL DEEP "STEP" CUT WATERFORD DISH, 12 in. *Circa* 1825. A very unusual specimen.

In Mrs. Oliver's collection.





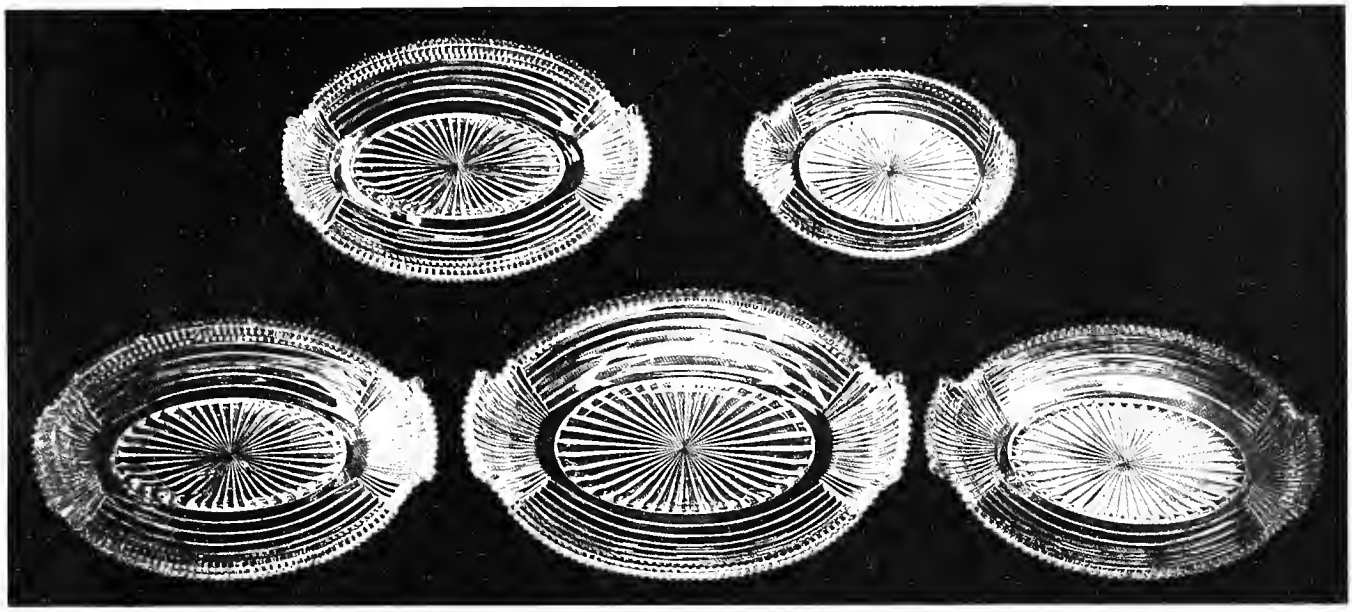


Set of "STEP" CUT DISHES with fan handles. Waterford. *circa* 1820.

In the collection of Mrs. Hall.

Pair of BANQUETING TAZZE, Munster glass of about 1790-1810. Made of heavy dark glass *in one piece*, with a heavily domed foot, and finely cut in slash and diamonds. They are 13 in. high, and weigh 32 lbs. each.

In the collection of Mrs. Hall.



Early IRISH "POSSET BOWL," probably 1730.
Heavy glass of a beautiful dark colour.
In Mrs. Rea's collection.

Large IRISH URN, *circa* 1795.
In Mr. R. Philipson's collection.

WATERFORD "CANOE" SHAPED BOWL, on scroll base, 1790.
14 in. long, 9 in. high.
In the Author's family collection.

A beautiful WATERFORD SALAD BOWL, *circa* 1785.
12 in. diam., 5 in. high.
In Colonel Fitzgerald Stannus's collection.

One of a pair of heavy URNS, very early Dublin.
12 in. high.
In Mr. Hugh Weguelin's collection.

A rare FINGER BOWL, marked "Dublin," very dark colour and soft glass. An early piece.
In Mr. Robert Frank's collection.

Round CORK BOWL, of beautiful colour and ring, *circa* 1785.

In Mr. Henderson's collection.

Three rare specimens of very early IRISH GLASS. The pressed piece in the centre is particularly beautiful in colour and texture, and the two vases are very heavy, probably early Dublin, with unfinished feet.

In Mr. R. Philipson's collection.

LIBRARY

IRISH PLAIN PUNCH BÔWL AND LADLE, heavy uncut glass of fine colour, *circa* 1770.

In Mr. R. Frank's collection.

Fine examples of the later period (after 1815) "STEP" CUTTING WATERFORD. This glass is whiter and much clearer than the earlier examples.

In the Author's collection.

One of the rarest WATERFORD "2-PIECE" BOWLS in existence, *circa* 1785. 12½ in. high, 10 in. wide, 14½ in. long. Remarkable for its colour and texture.

Originally in the Author's collection; now in the Walter Harding collection.

WATERFORD "HELMET" BOWL, very rare, and a pair of large, finely cut oval WATERFORD DISHES. Adam period.

In Major Courtauld's collection.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

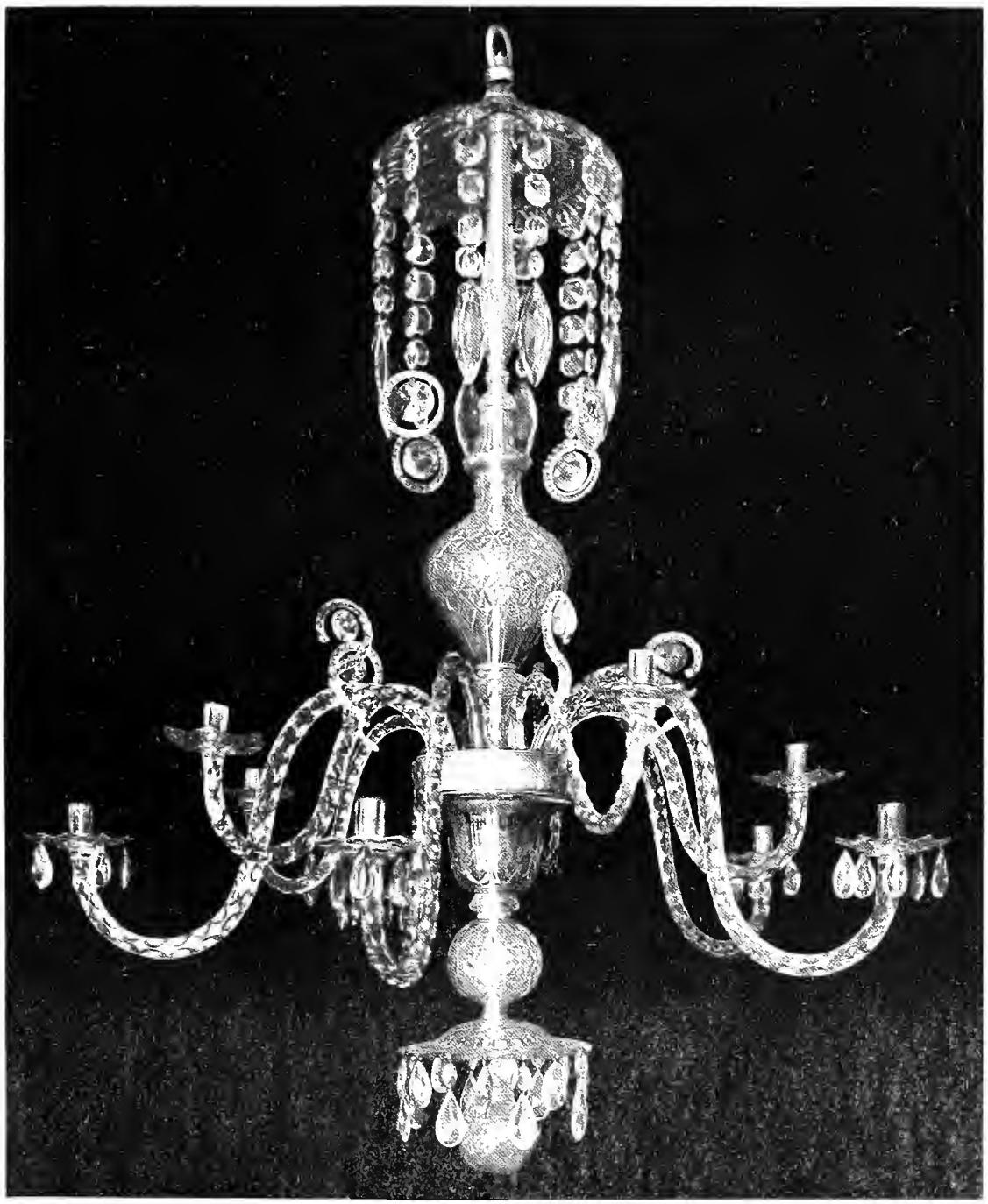
CANDELABRA, CANDLESTICKS AND CHANDELIERS

Original CHANDELIER, made at Waterford in 1785. 6 ft. 3 in. long. The upper trio of arms are "hand bent," and the stars on these arms are 6 in. high. The pendant at the bottom weighs 9 lbs.

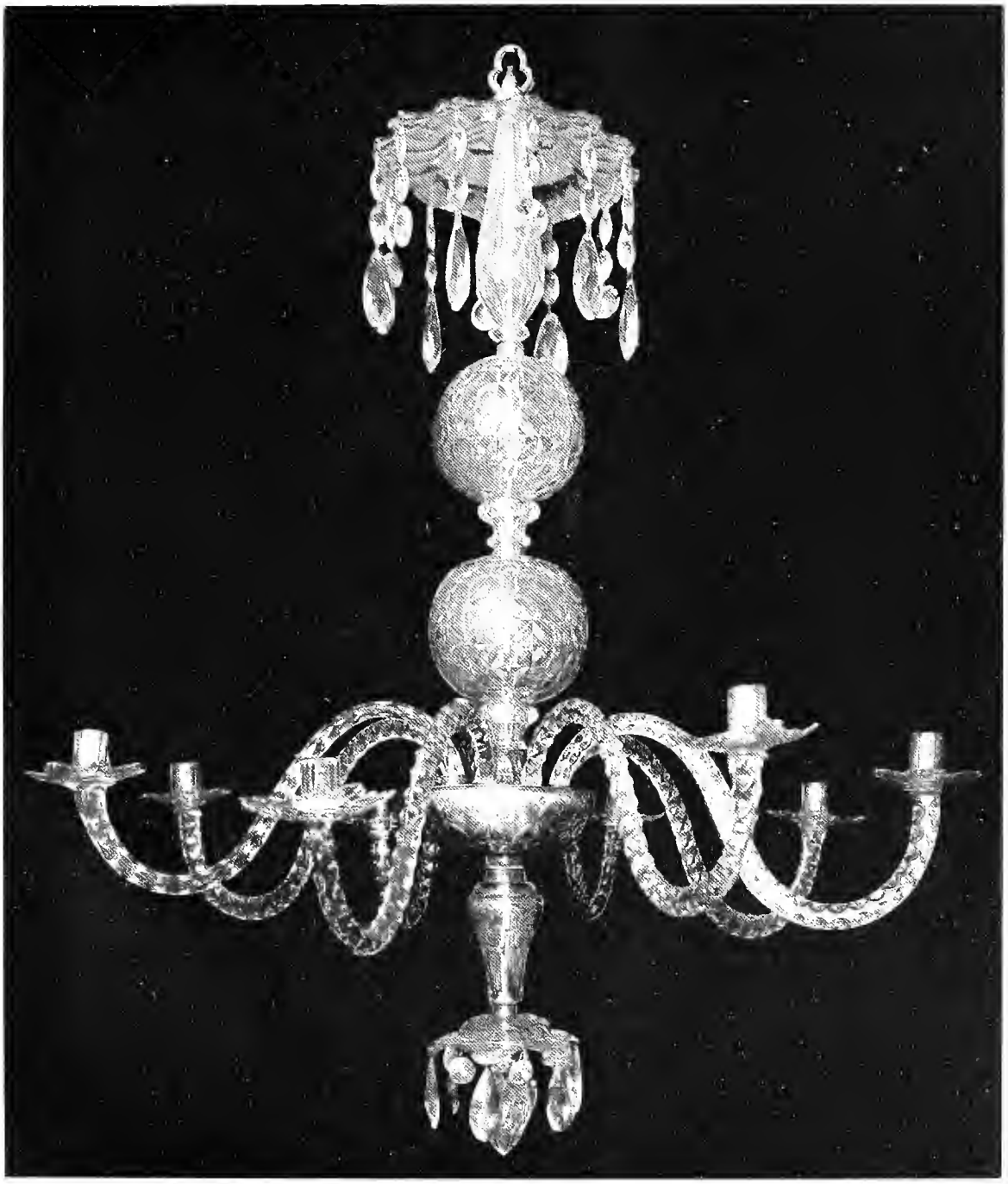
In the Author's family collection.

Original CHANDELIER, made at Waterford in 1788. 6 ft. 6 in. long. The arms are each 2 ft. 8 in. long, and it weighs 2½ cwt. The cutting, workmanship, and colour are unsurpassed. It is built upon an iron rod covered in silver tubing.

In the Author's family collection.



A WATERFORD CHANDELIER of exquisite design and cutting.
4 ft. 6 in. long.
In the Author's collection.

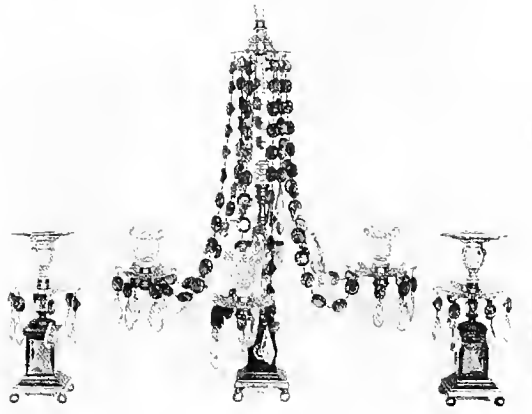


Pair of WATERFORD SIDEBOARD LIGHTS, of the finest period and rare cutting. Adam design.

In the Author's collection.

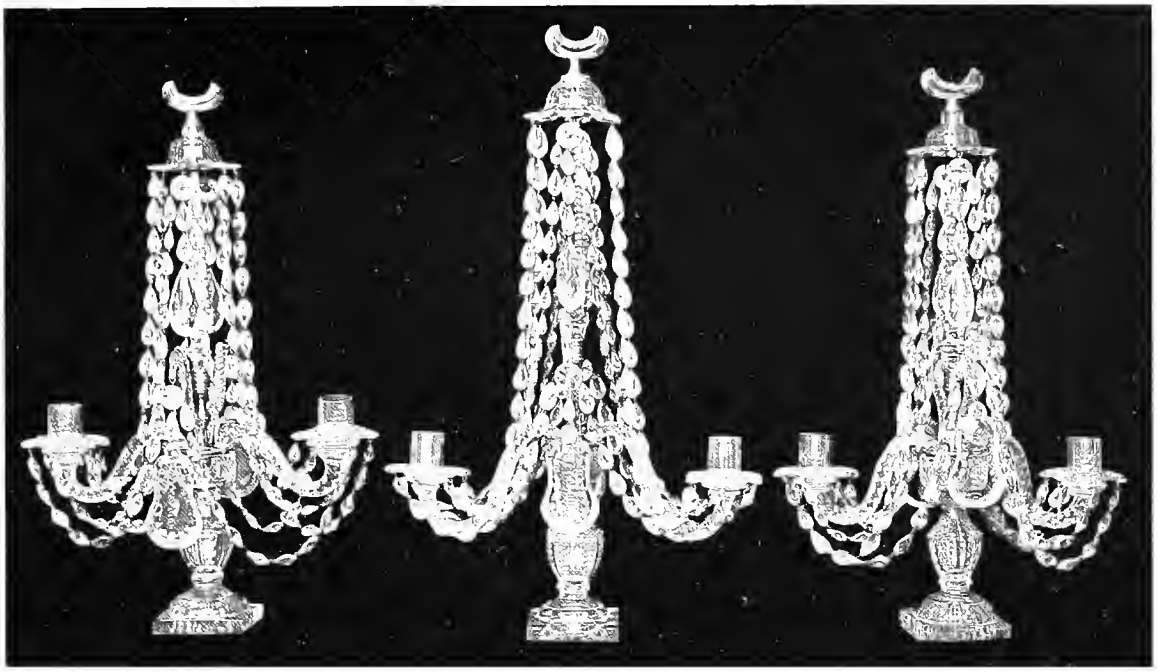
WATERFORD GLASS CHIMNEY SET, draped with deep "pot-metal" blue drops. 20 in. high. Probably Dublin, *circa* 1815.

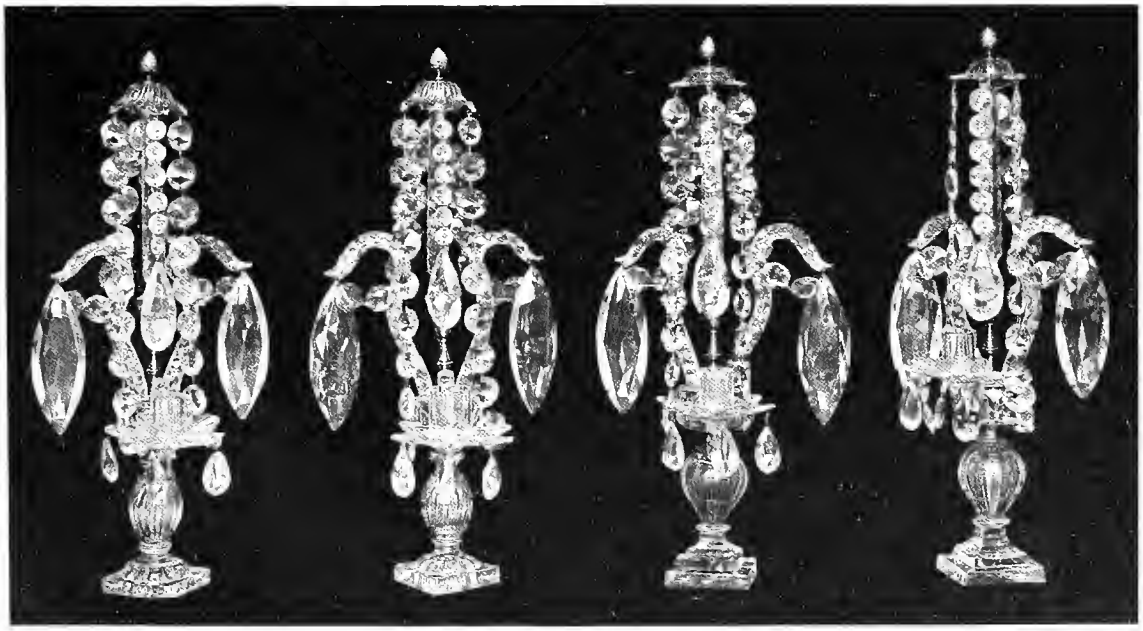
In the Author's collection.



Set of three WATERFORD TABLE LIGHTS, 26 in. high.
In Viscount Furness's collection.

Rare set of four single DINING TABLE LIGHTS. The facet cutting on the long "reflectors" is particularly fine and interesting. Waterford, *circa* 1785.
In Viscount Furness's collection.





One of a pair of ADAM LIGHTS, 4 ft. high. Waterford glass, on old marble "Bosi" work pedestals. Slightly restored.

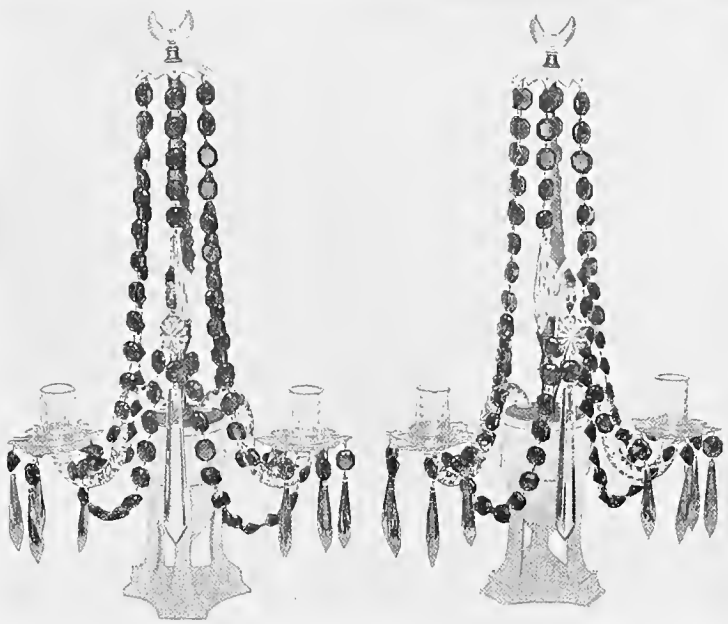
In Viscount Furness's collection.

Typical pair of IRISH TABLE LIGHTS, 25 in. high, on square bases. *Circa* 1780.

In the Author's collection.

Pair of WATERFORD TABLE LIGHTS, hung with the palest amber round drops (Dublin), and mounted on Wedgwood urns. 22 in. high. Late Adam period.

In Mr. Hugh Weguelin's collection.



Three WATERFORD FACET-CUT TABLE LIGHTS, with almond-shaped drops, 22 in. and 23 in. high. *Circa* 1783.

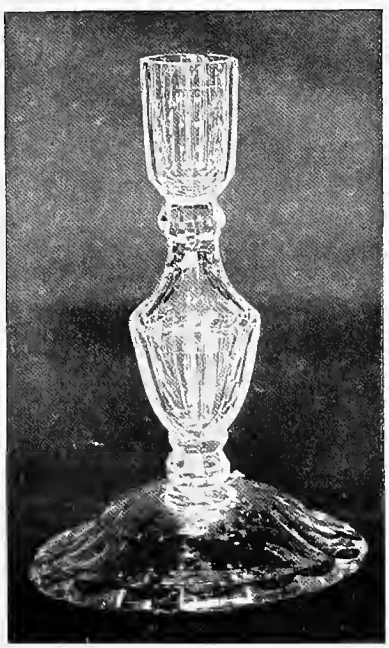
In Mr. E. Parsons' collection.

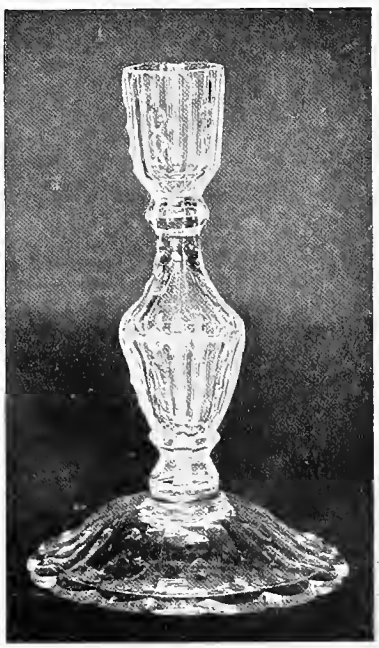
Three WATERFORD TABLE LIGHTS, Adam period, 24 in. high, with "almond" drops.

In Major Pope's collection.

Pair of WATERFORD CANDLESTICKS, 1785. 10 in. high.

In Mr. H. Samuelson's collection.





PUBLIC LIBRARY

WATERFORD CHANDELIER, 4 ft. 3 in. long. *Circa* 1783.
In Mrs. COX'S collection.

Early WATERFORD CANDELABRA and pair of CANDLESTICKS with facet-cut ornament.

In Colonel Jenner's collection.

ADAM CHANDELIER, Waterford, in its original condition. 5 ft. long.
In Mrs. Sabin's collection.

IRISH CANDLE SHADES, 23 in. high; finest period. One cut flat double stars. These shades were used in halls and covered large-size church candles. Unique specimens.

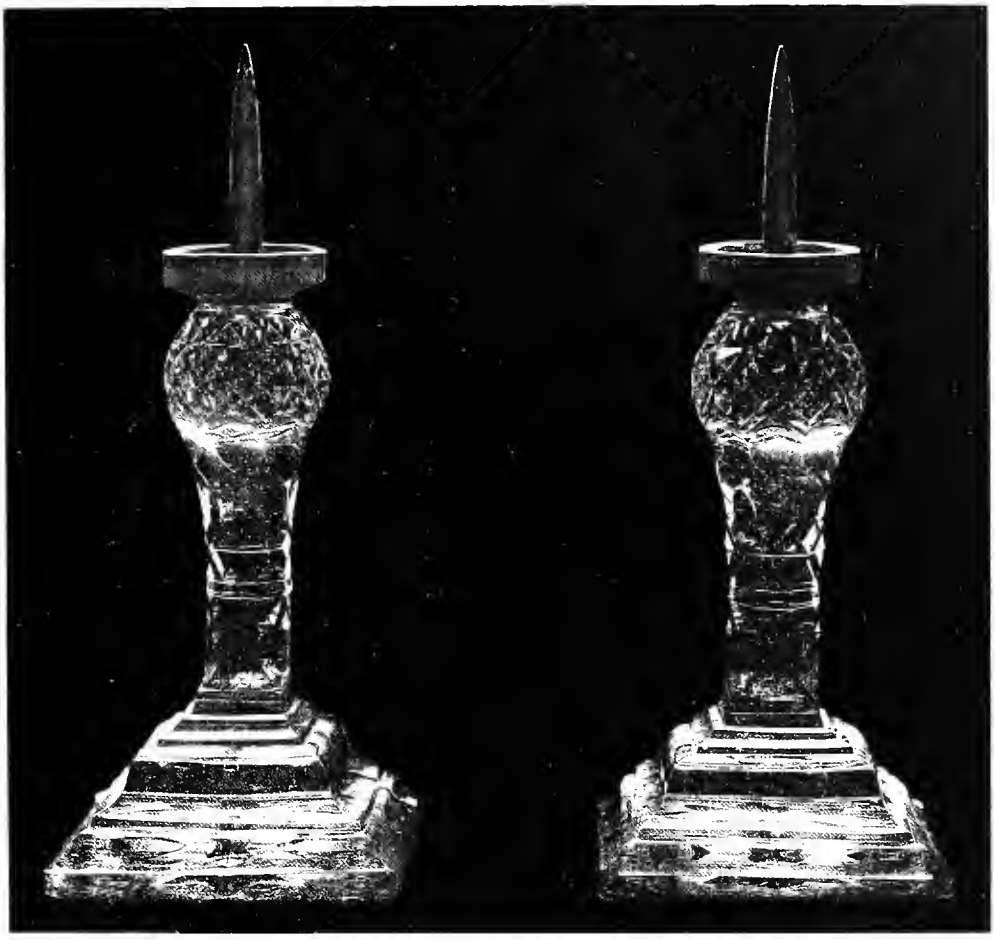
In the Author's collection.

Pair of WATERFORD ALTAR CANDLESTICKS. *Circa* 1783.
In Mr. R. Frank's collection.

Three unique early IRISH CANDLESTICKS. Probably 1760.

In Mrs. Rea's collection.

These candlesticks have the largest bases on record, with high domes, and bear the "pontil" mark *on top of the nozzle instead of at the bottom.* They were made upside down.



Very large IRISH CANDLESTICKS, with unusual bases. *Circa* 1770.
In Mrs. Rea's collection.

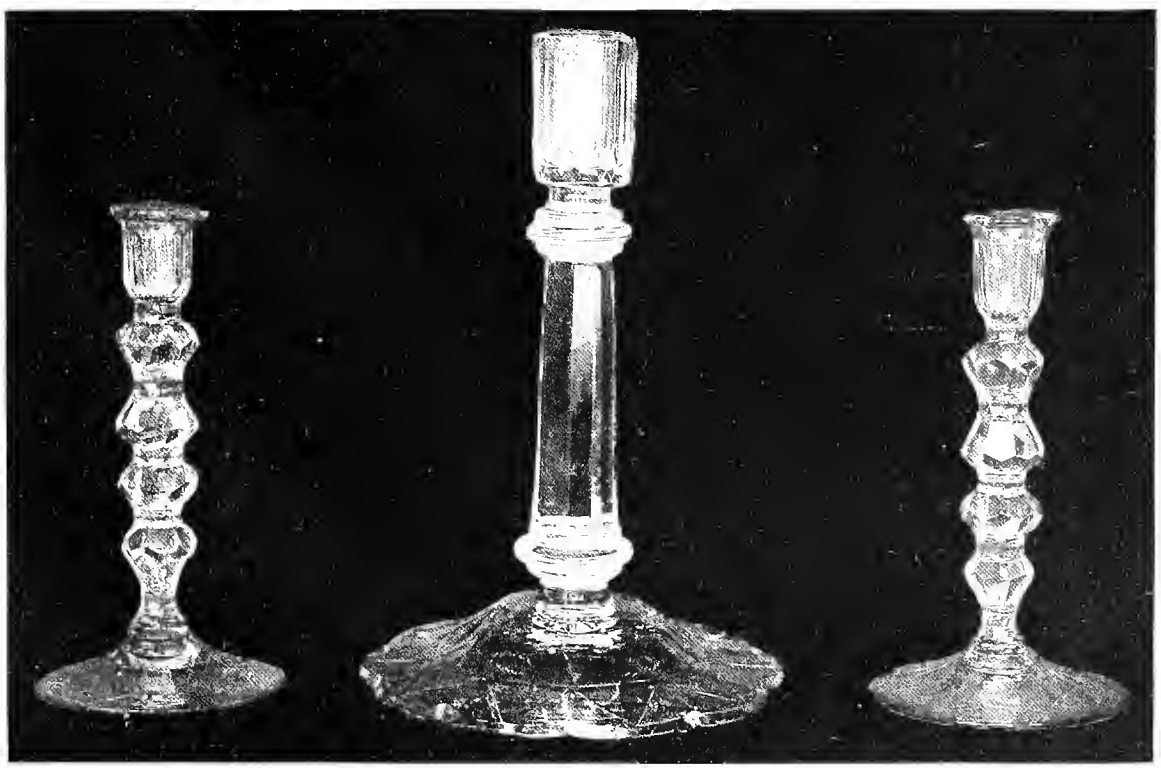
Pair of rare WATERFORD TAPERSTICKS, 5 in. high. *Circa* 1790.
In Mrs. Rea's collection.

Pair of IRISH LAMPS. Probably Waterford, 1790. Very unusual specimens.

In the Walter Harding collection.

WATERFORD CANDLESTICK, 1783, 14 in. high: and a pair of early CORK CANDLESTICKS, 12 in. high.

In the Walter Harding collection.

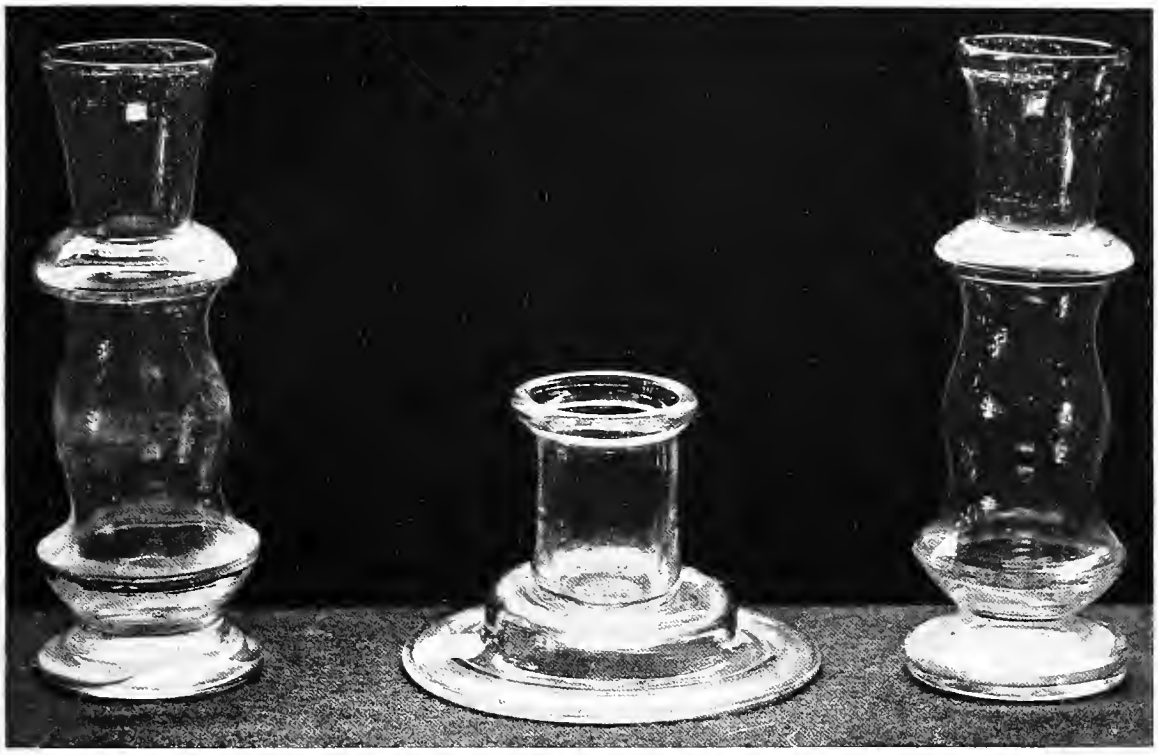


Set of three very early IRISH BLOWN GLASS RUSHLIGHT HOLDERS, early eighteenth century.

In Mr. Robert Frank's collection.

WATERFORD TABLE LIGHTS, of exceptional quality, 24 in. high.

In Mr. Fitzroy Chapman's collection.



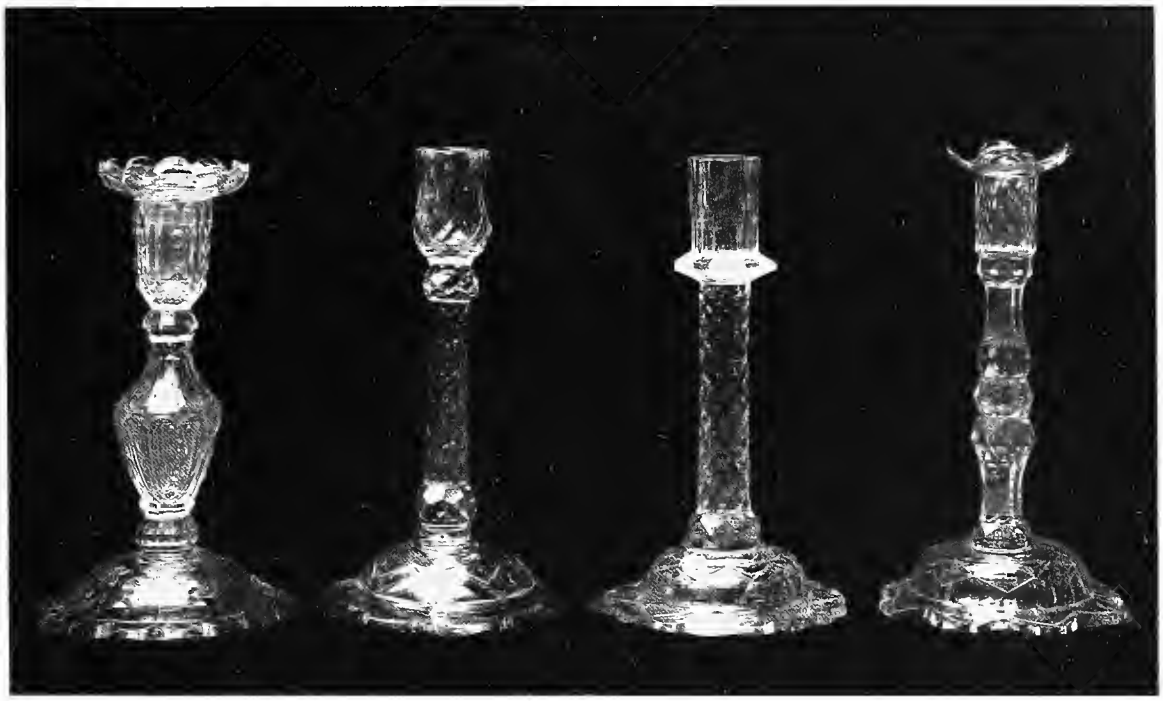
Pair of antique ALTAR CANDLESTICKS, about 16 in. high.
Waterford, of the very finest period and cutting.
In the Walter Harding collection.

Four fine specimens of WATERFORD CANDLESTICKS.

In the Walter Harding collection.

A wonderful Irish deep-coloured, moulded MUG, 8 in. high. Probably Dublin. *Circa* 1740.

In the Walter Harding collection.



DECANTERS, JUGS, AND BOTTLES

SHAPED WATERFORD JUG.
11 in. high.
In the Walter Harding collection.

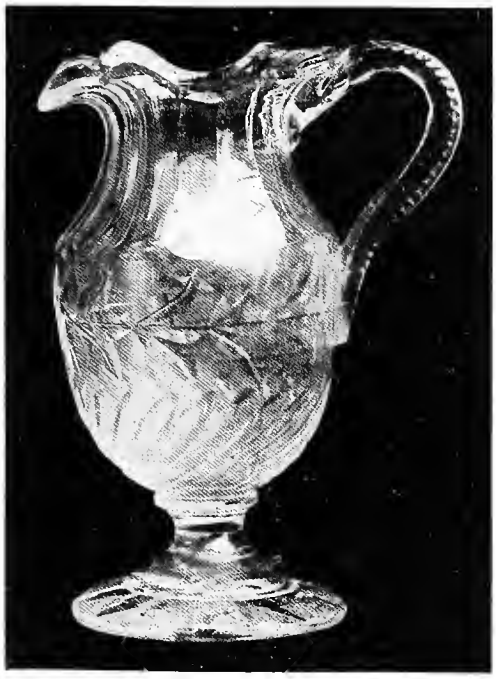
UNIQUE JUG, ordinarily termed a "freak piece." 25 in. high, weighing 18 lbs. Irish glass, *circa* 1760. An ordinary cream jug is placed beside it for purposes of comparison.
In the Author's collection.

Three very interesting IRISH JUGS. The two cream jugs are finest period Waterford. The centre jug is very early and the metal peculiarly soft.
In Mr. R. Philipson's collection.

TANKARD, Waterford or Cork, *circa* 1785. 9 in. high.

TWO-HANDLED SPUN CUP, probably Dublin, 1750; deep toned glass, very soft to the touch. 8 in. high.
In the Author's collection.

HEAVY LUSTRE CUT JUG, flint glass, *circa* 1800. 7 in. high.
In Commander Swithinbank's collection.



Early BLOWN CORK DECANTERS, with the primitive engraving of the period. These decanters are impress-marked "Cork Glass Co."

In the Author's collection.

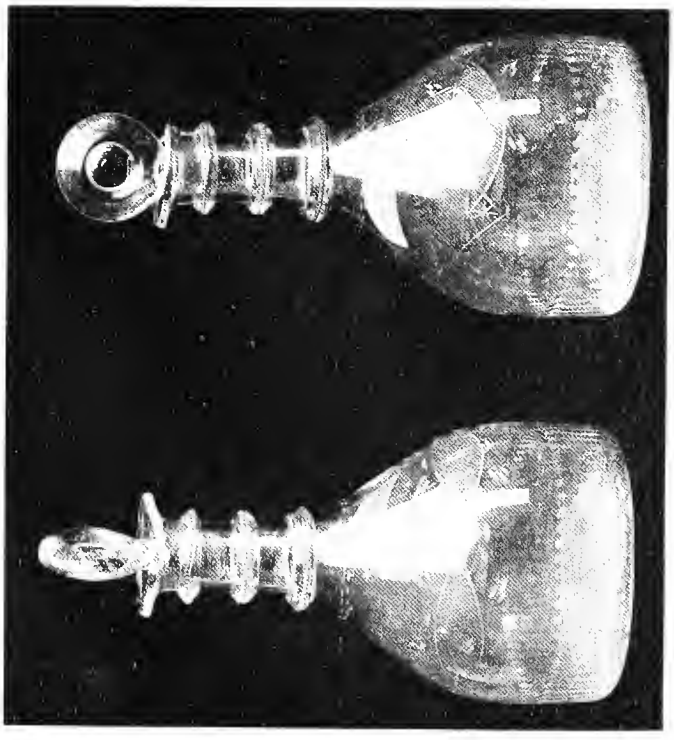
Pair of heavy old MUNSTER GLASS LIQUEUR BOTTLES and an early BLOWN IRISH GLASS DECANTER, engraved.

In the Author's collection.

STEP AND PRISMATIC CUT LIQUEUR BOTTLES, Waterford, 1820–50.

SWAG AND DIAMOND CUT WATERFORD DECANTERS, *circa* 1780–90.

In the Author's collection.



Set of early "MUNSTER" JUGS.

In the Author's collection.

Set of early "MUNSTER" DECANTERS.

In the Author's collection.

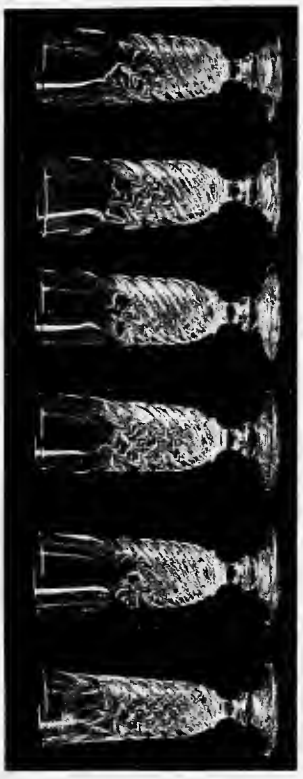
BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

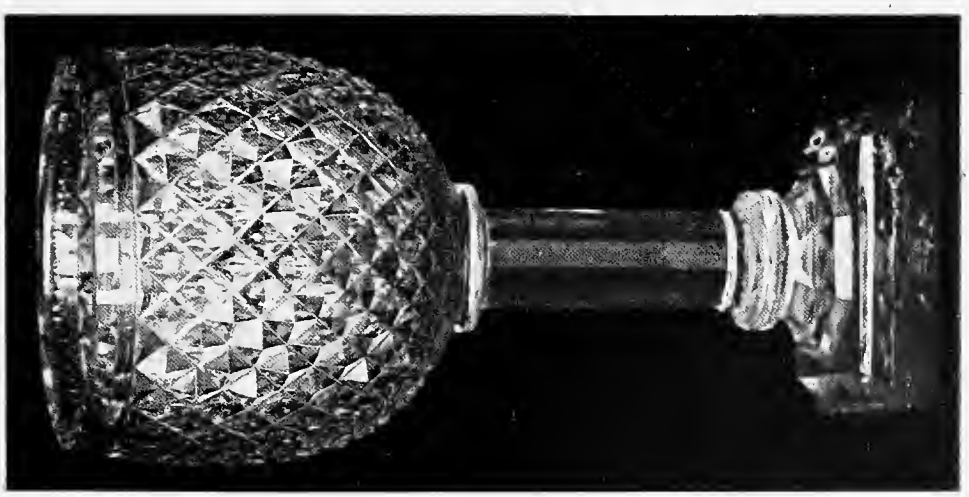
GOBLETS, CUPS, AND CHALICES

A set of DUBLIN "LUSTRE CUT" GOBLETS, *circa* 1850.
The property of Mr. David Blair, who has a similar set of tumblers.

CHALICE, 1790–1800. Sharp diamond cut, 13 in. high. One of the rarest pieces of Irish glass.
In Mrs. Hall's collection.

Early SWEETMEAT STANDS. Irish glass, moulded 1760–70.
In the Author's collection.





A rare CHALICE. Munster glass, 1790–1800.

In Mrs. Magee's collection.

SWEETMEAT STANDS

A WATERFORD BASKET SWEETMEAT STAND, 24 in. high.

In Mrs. Magee's collection.

MOULDED SWEETMEAT STAND, with two candle sconces. Early Cork.

In Mrs. Magee's collection.

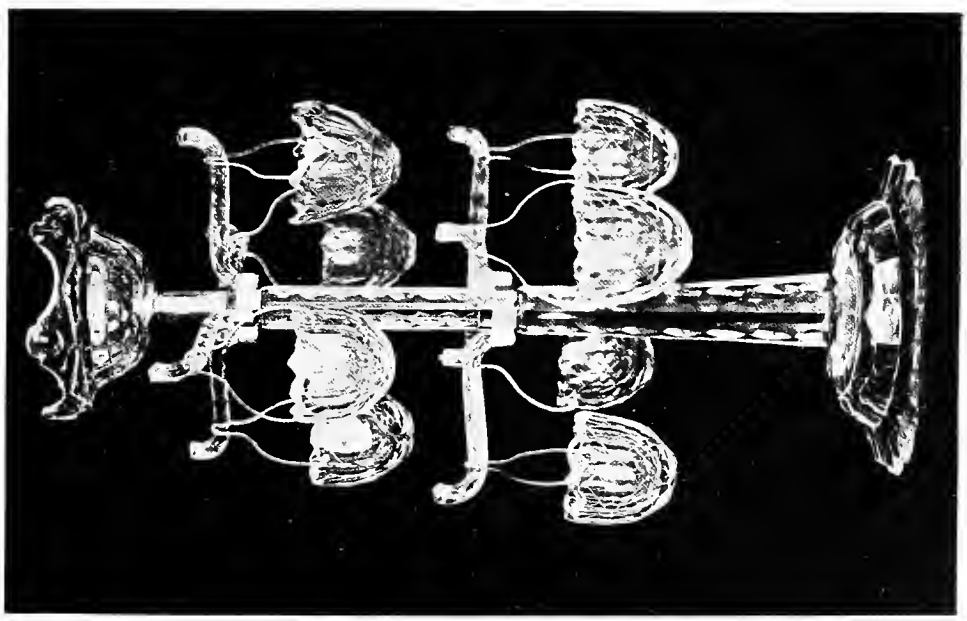


TABLE SERVICES

An entire early WATERFORD DESSERT SERVICE.
Leaf cutting, and "drawn stem" wine-glasses.
In the possession of the Hon. Mrs. Vickers.

WATERFORD DESSERT SERVICE, *circa* 1785.
In the collection of Major Pope.

A miniature WATERFORD SWEETMEAT STAND, only 13 in. high. The handles of the baskets are glass, and the piece is a most beautiful colour. Late Adam period.

In the Walter Harding collection.

Early DUBLIN POSSET TWO-HANDLED BOWL, 1760; FLAT FLASK, 1770; GOBLETS, MUGS, and TEA CADDY of early dates.

In the Author's collection.

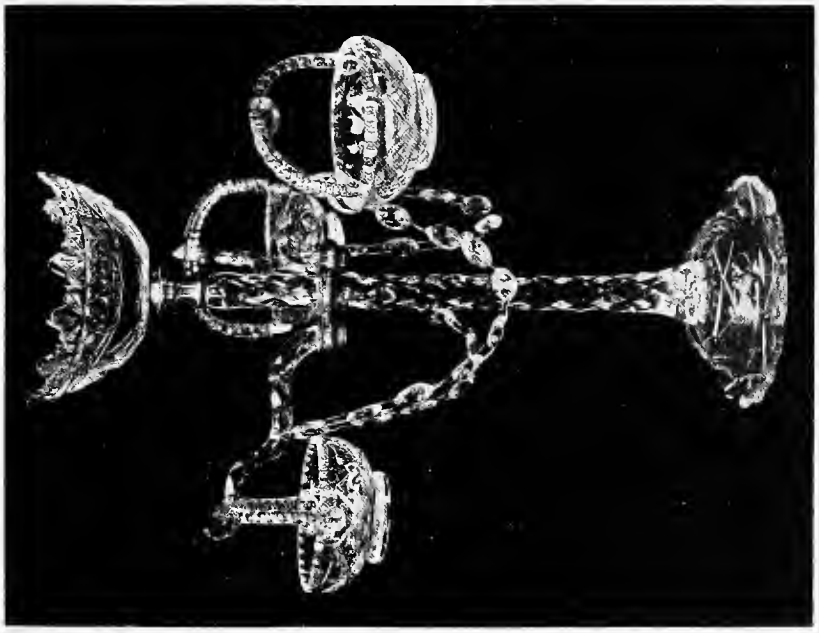


TABLE SERVICE OF ENGRAVED CORK GLASS, early Adam period. Glass older than the engraving.

In the collection of Mr. Robert Frank.

EARLY IRISH GLASS, the lamp probably as early as 1660. Originally in the Author's collection: now in the Walter Harding collection.

URNS, HONEY POTS, SALTS, ETC.

Pair of early Irish URNS, 22 in. high. Magnificent soft dark metal and very shallow cutting. Probably no duplicates.

In the collection of Commander Swithinbank.

Collection of tall URNS, Cork and Waterford, *circa* 1785.

In the collection of Commander Swithinbank.

Set of three WATERFORD URNS, *circa* 1783. Very fine examples of flat cutting. 14 in. and 12 in. high.

In the collection of Mrs. Hall.

MISCELLANEOUS

Pair of WIG STANDS, probably Dublin, heavy lead-coloured glass of an early period.

In Mr. Robert Frank's collection.

FINE MUNSTER GLASS.
In the collection of Mr. Hunt.

TYPICAL WATERFORD CRUETS AND CRUET BOTTLES.

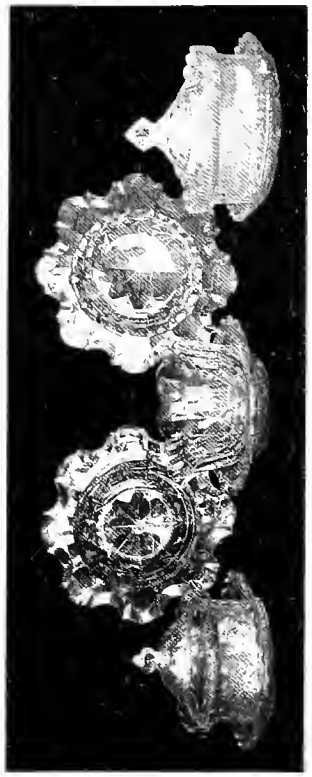
OLD STRAWBERRY CUT DUBLIN TEAPOT.
In Mrs. Day's collection.

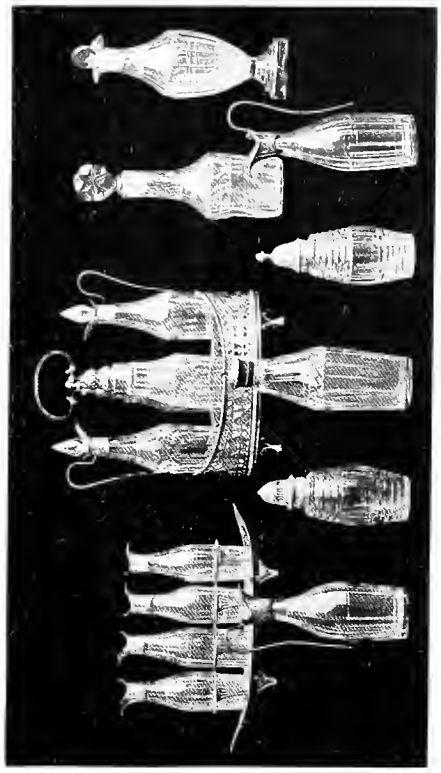
OLD MUNSTER GLASS TEAPOT, moulded.
In the Author's collection.

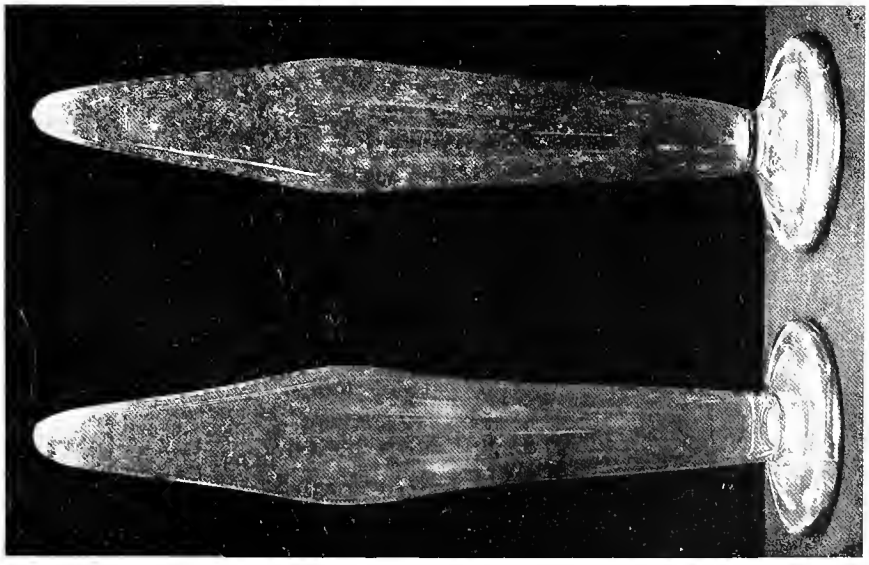
TEAPOT. Waterford, *circa* 1783.
In Mr. Robert Frank's collection.

CREAM OR ICE PAILS, Irish, *circa* 1825–35. A wonderful example of deep step cutting, with feather handles. The glass is nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ in. thick.

In the possession of Mrs. McBean.







A very fine old Irish blue glass BOWL, with a magnificent ring, 9 in. diam.

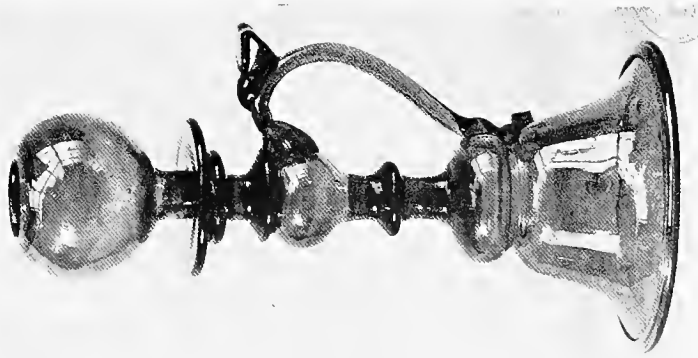
In the Author's family collection.

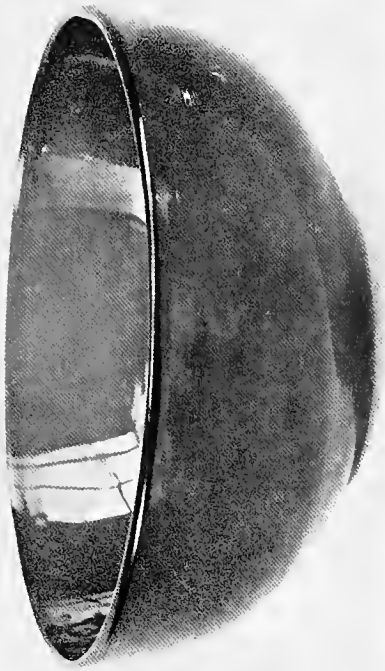
A very rare Dublin blue glass BOWL, with unfinished foot, 8 in. high; extremely heavy. Specially made, *circa* 1740.

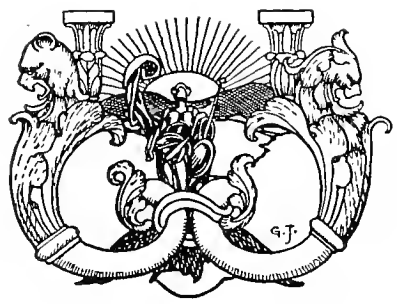
In the Author's family collection.

Pair of LACEMAKER'S LAMPS, heavy purple-blue glass, made in Dublin, *circa* 1730–40. 13 in. high.

In the Author's family collection.






G.J.

RUBBINGS

The only cutting on a rare canoe-shaped Waterford bowl in the Author's collection. "Flutes" also a very early idea, but became deeper and smaller and sharper as time went on.

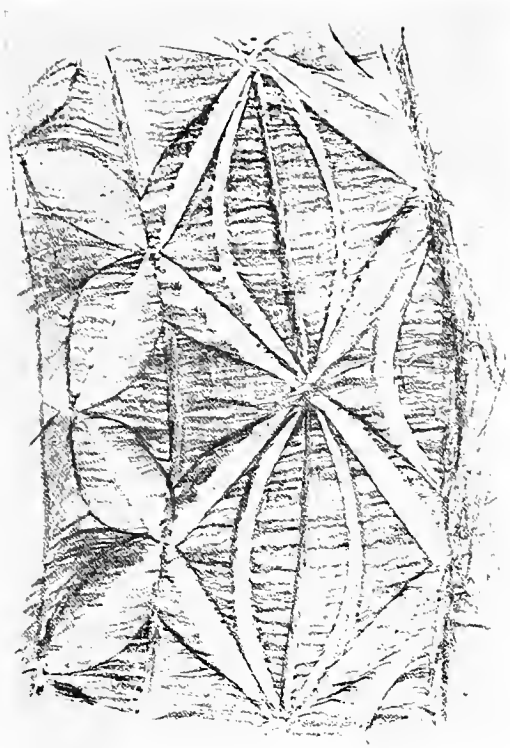
Vandyke cutting, more commonly known as "bull's-eye." A cutting very much done between 1770 and 1800, and probably more copied both abroad and in England *than any other*. Sometimes referred to as "Geometrical design."

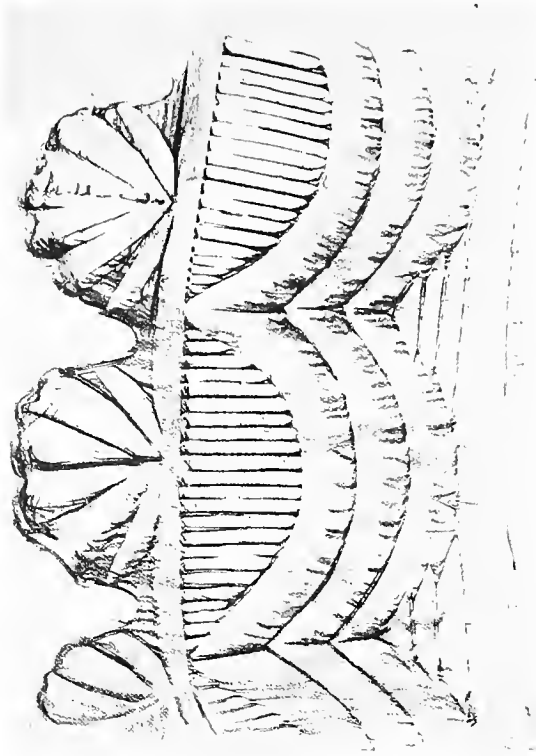
A wonderful special cutting on a "pinched" Waterford boat-shaped bowl a little deeper than engraving.

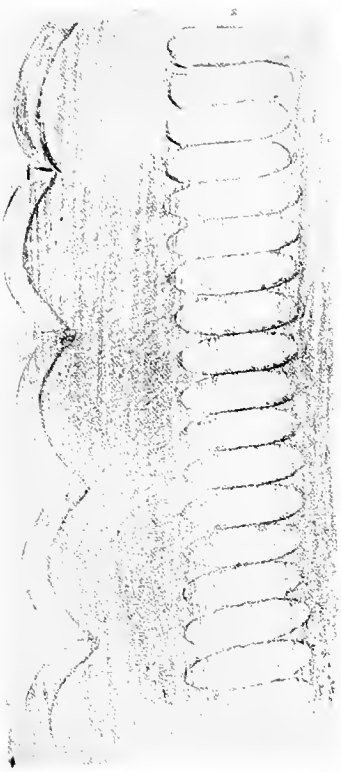
In the Author's collection.

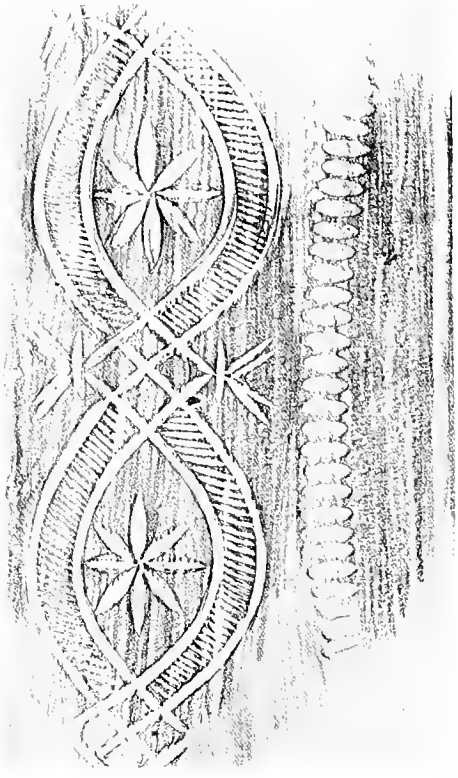
Beautiful swag and line cutting with fan edge. This is an early effort, probably 1765; but there is a fine example on a Waterford dessert service in the possession of Colonel Wike.

A very beautiful fan edge from a fine Waterford bowl of *circa* 1815.









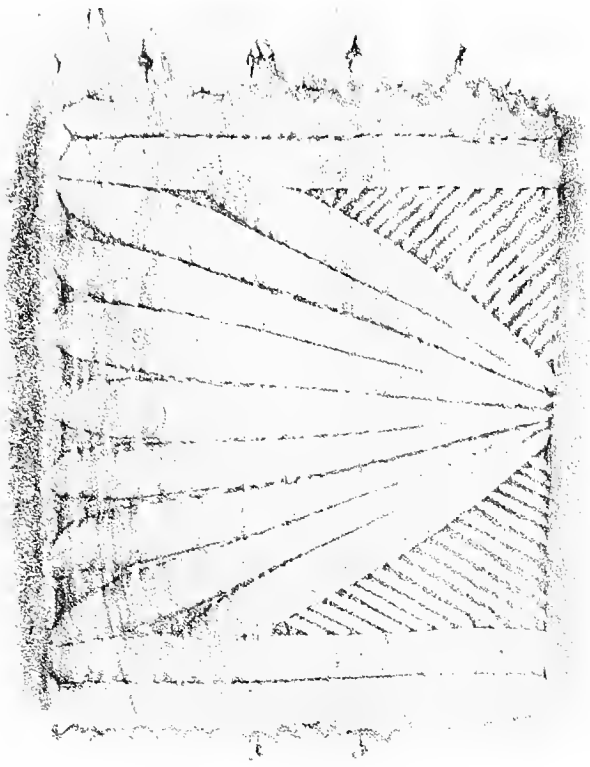
Hobnail cutting, *late* 1830, so often confused with diamond cutting.

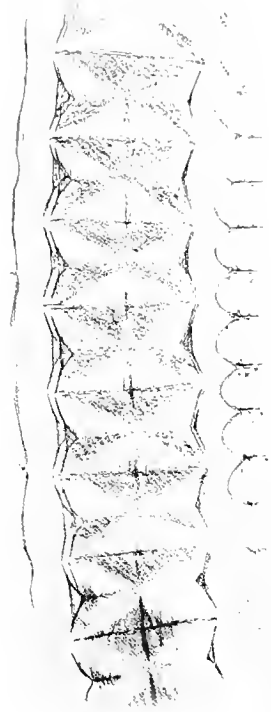
Fine "fan" cutting from an old Waterford decanter.

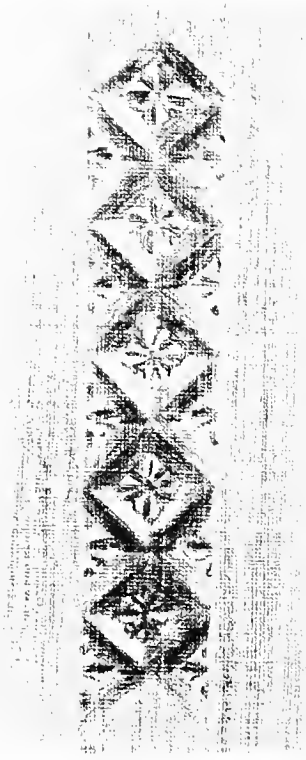
Strawberry cutting, so often confused with hobnail cutting; much used from 1780. This is an early example. Note the unevenness of the lines.

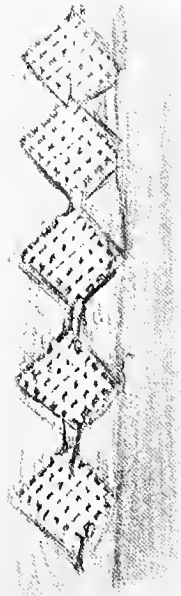
Flat diamond. This was a *shallow* cutting from *circa* 1768 onwards; after 1790 it became *much* deeper and sharper, the centre coming out to a sharp point.

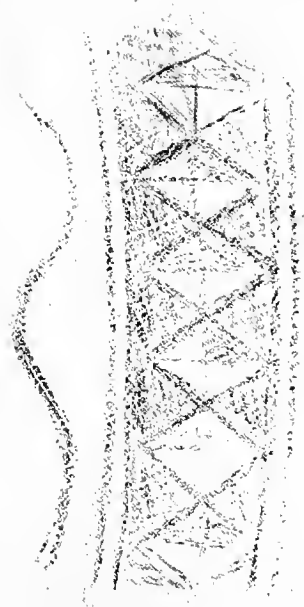
"Double," or "long" diamond, so often called in England "lozenge." It was a very soft shallow cutting till after 1780, when it became bolder and deeper.









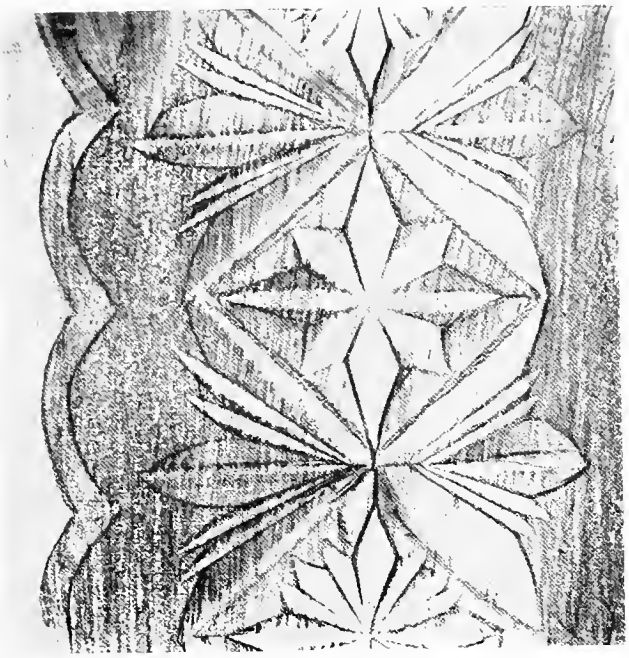


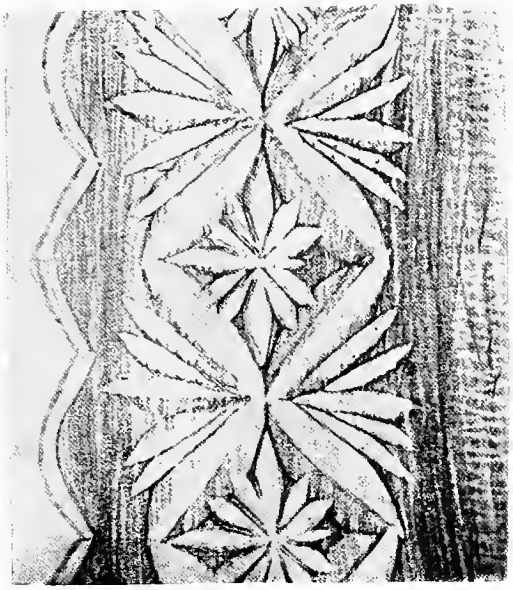
One of many adaptations of cutting on Irish glass from 1790 to 1835.

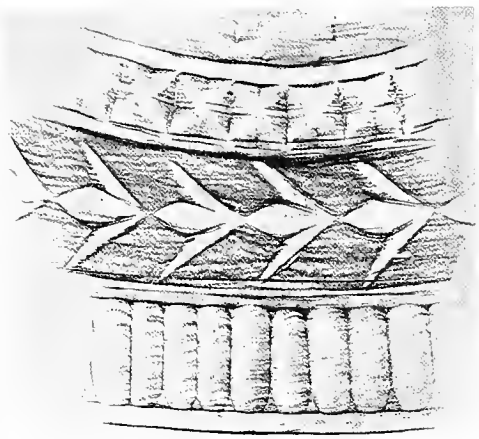
Cutting from a rare Waterford bowl. "Leaf," "shallow diamond," and "flute." This early cutting was very irregular, and so shallow that it is little deeper than heavy engraving.

One of many adaptations of cutting on Irish glass from 1790 to 1835.

A fine "castellated" edge from a Waterford fruit dish.





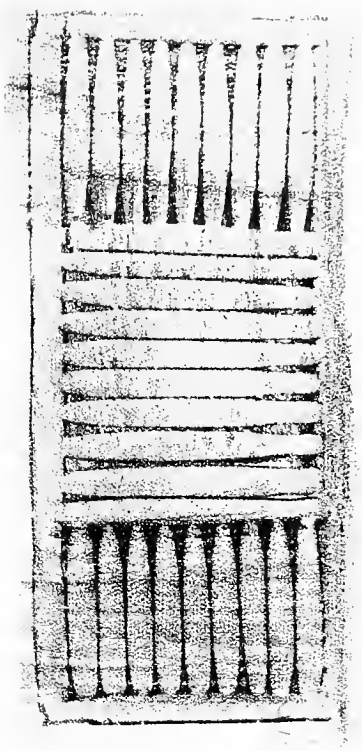


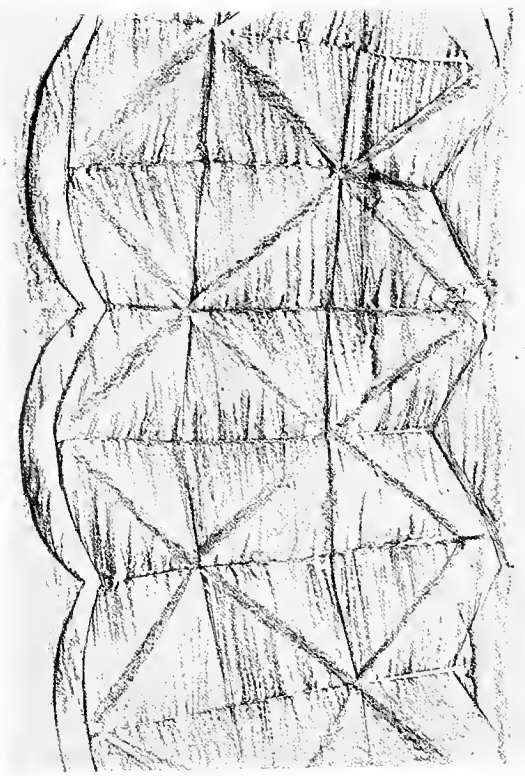
A most rare and very shallow adaptation of diamond cutting from an old Irish chalice, *circa* 1770.

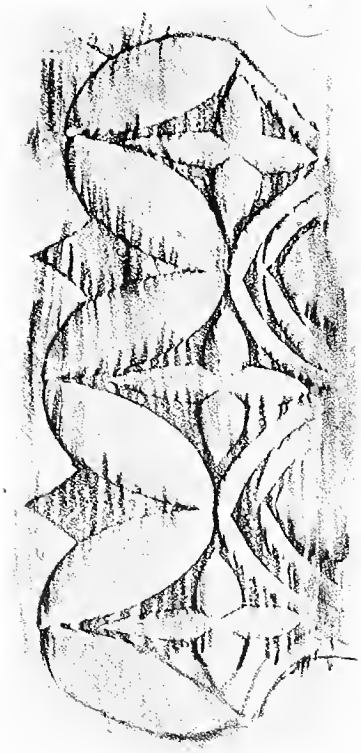
A most beautiful bit of cutting on a rare early Waterford mirror in Commander Swithinbank's collection.

Curious shallow cutting from a set of Cork plates and finger-bowls in the Author's collection.

An example of step cutting, horizontal and vertical, from a late Waterford bowl.





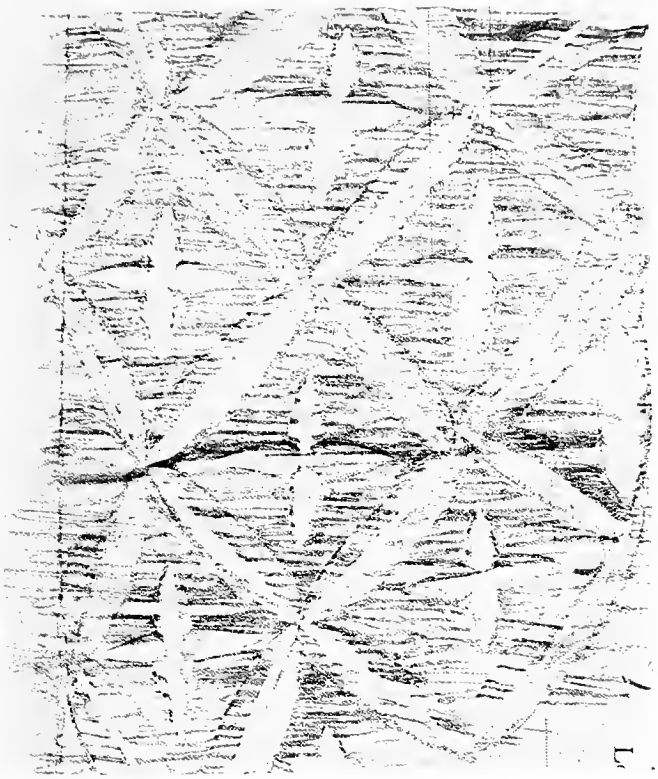


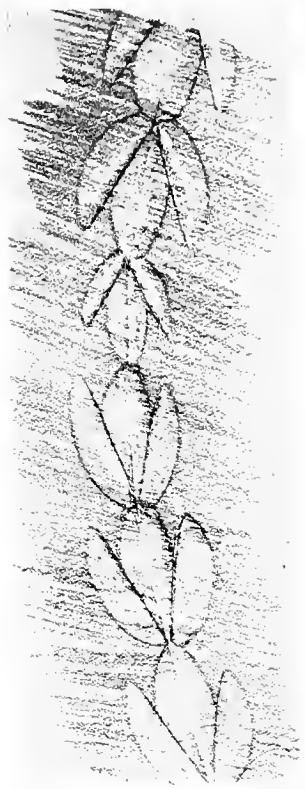
Cutting from an early Waterford canoe-shaped bowl.
In the Author's collection.

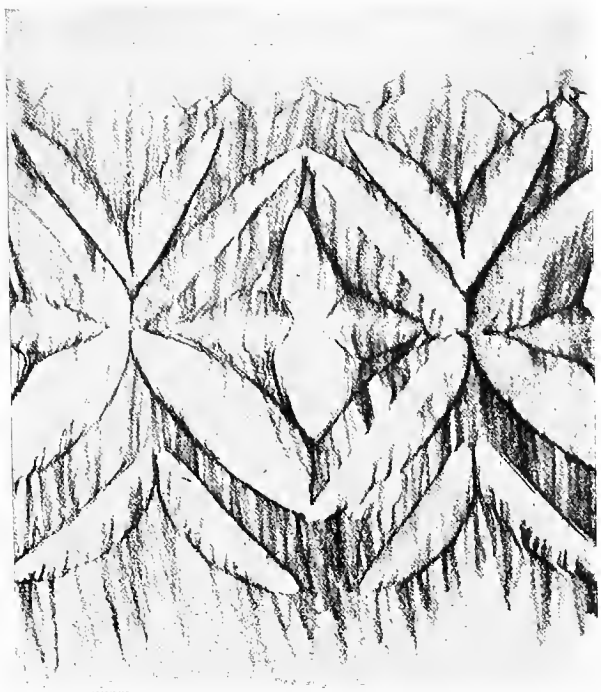
Very early cutting from Mr. Weguelin's Waterford urns, showing the remarkable inaccuracy of the cutting.

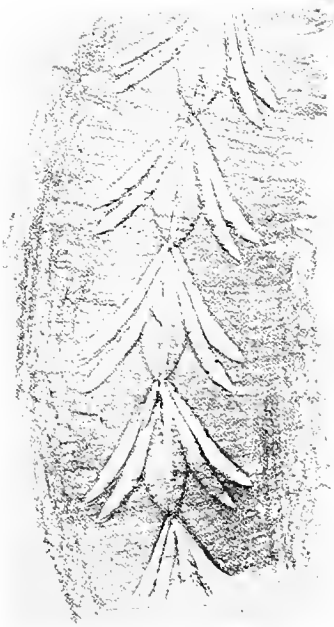
A variation of the early leaf cutting, somewhat later, therefore a little sharper and more symmetrical.

Flat "leaf," one of the first ideas of cutting. It is so soft that to the touch it is almost like moulding.









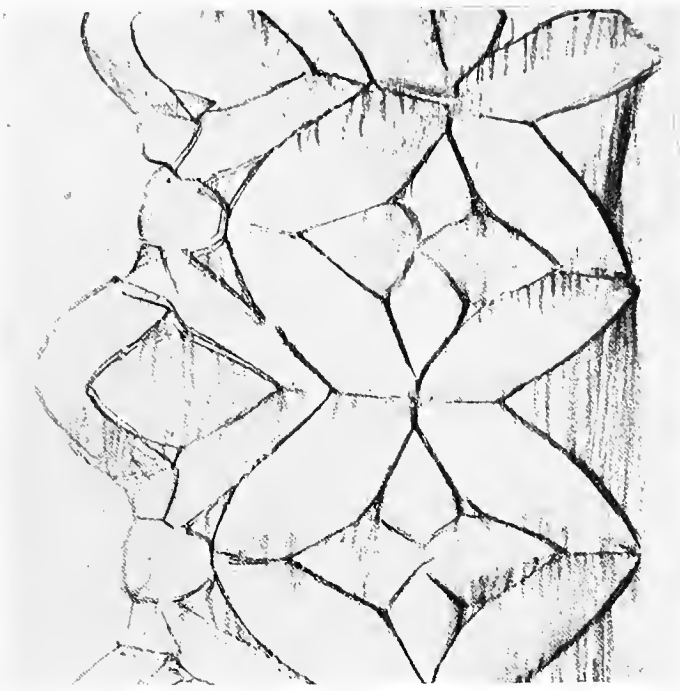
A wonderful example of "lustre" cutting. Dublin, *circa* 1785.

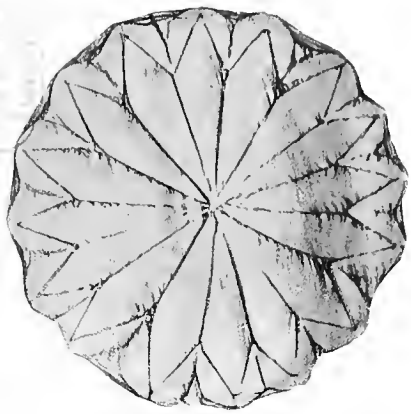
Cutting, soft and shallow, from a Cork bowl, late eighteenth century.
In the Author's collection.

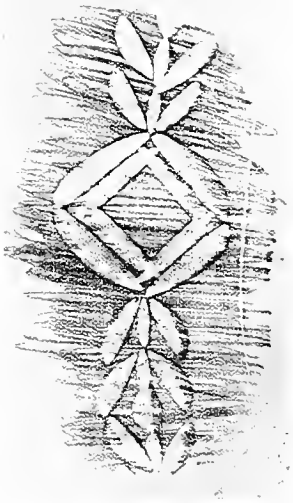
A soft early star found on the bottoms of finger-bowls and decanters, *circa* 1750. Note the remarkable variation from the given centre.

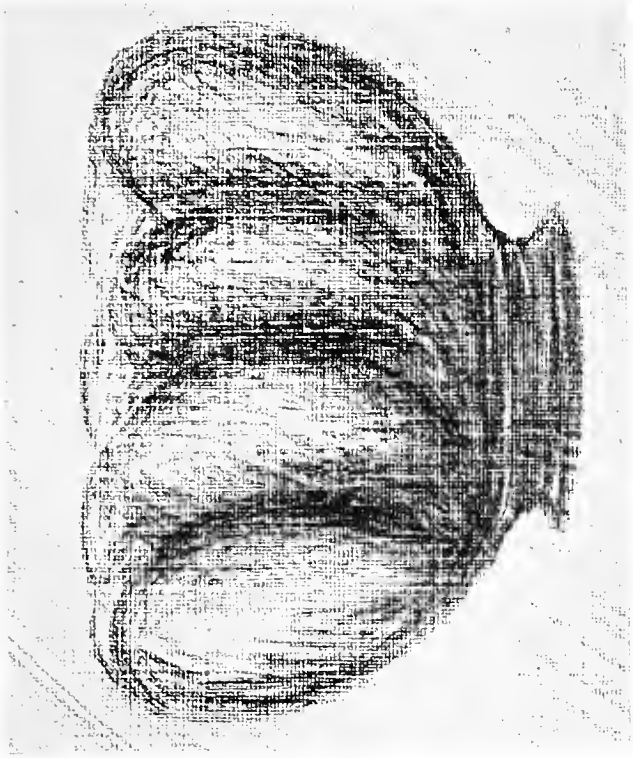
A very early husk or leaf cutting from an early Irish wine-glass, *circa* 1760. This is one of the earliest cuttings.

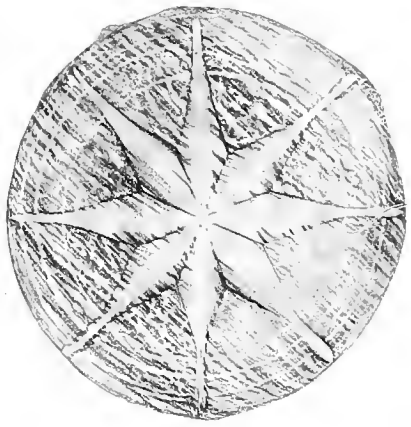
A very beautiful shallow-cut star, from a Waterford dish, about 1790.











ONE OF A PAIR OF DUBLIN WALL LIGHTS.

In the Author's collection.

From a drawing in the Author's possession.

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